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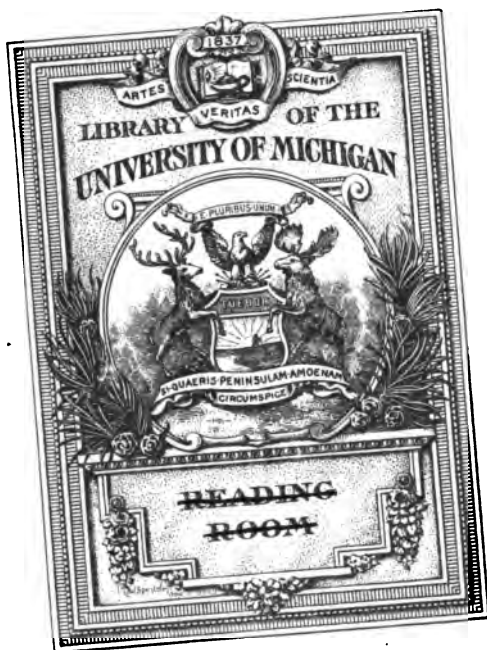
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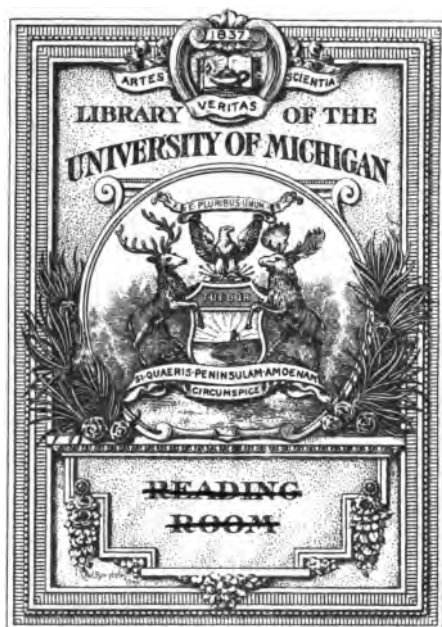


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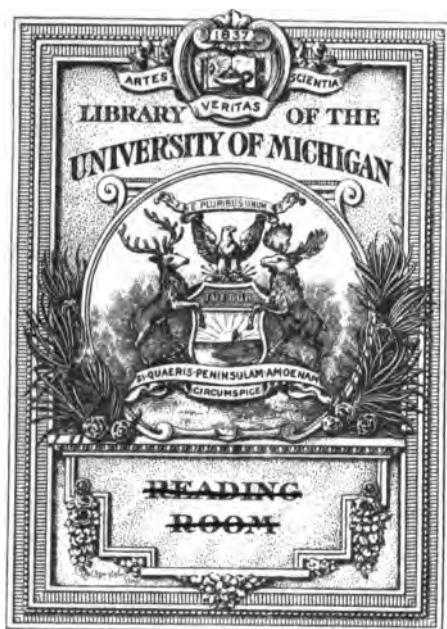


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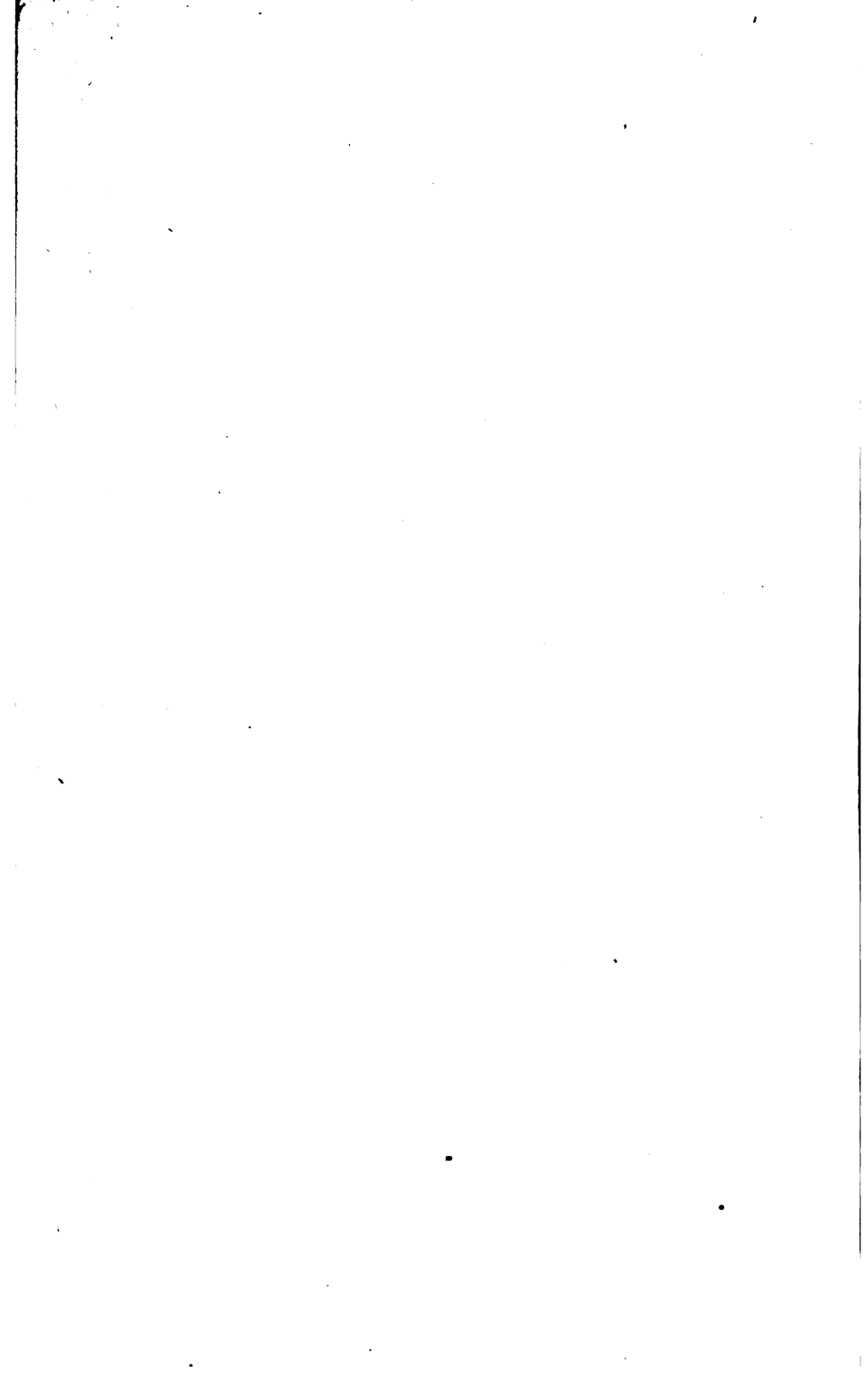
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YOU



Homer—The Blind Poet

Photogravure. From a Painting by W. A. Bouguereau



Classic Tales

by

Famous Authors

CONTAINING COMPLETE SELECTIONS FROM
THE WORLD'S BEST AUTHORS WITH PREFATORY
BIOGRAPHICAL AND SYNOPTICAL NOTES

Edited and Arranged by
FREDERICK B. DE BERARD

With a General Introduction by
ROSSITER JOHNSON, LL.D.

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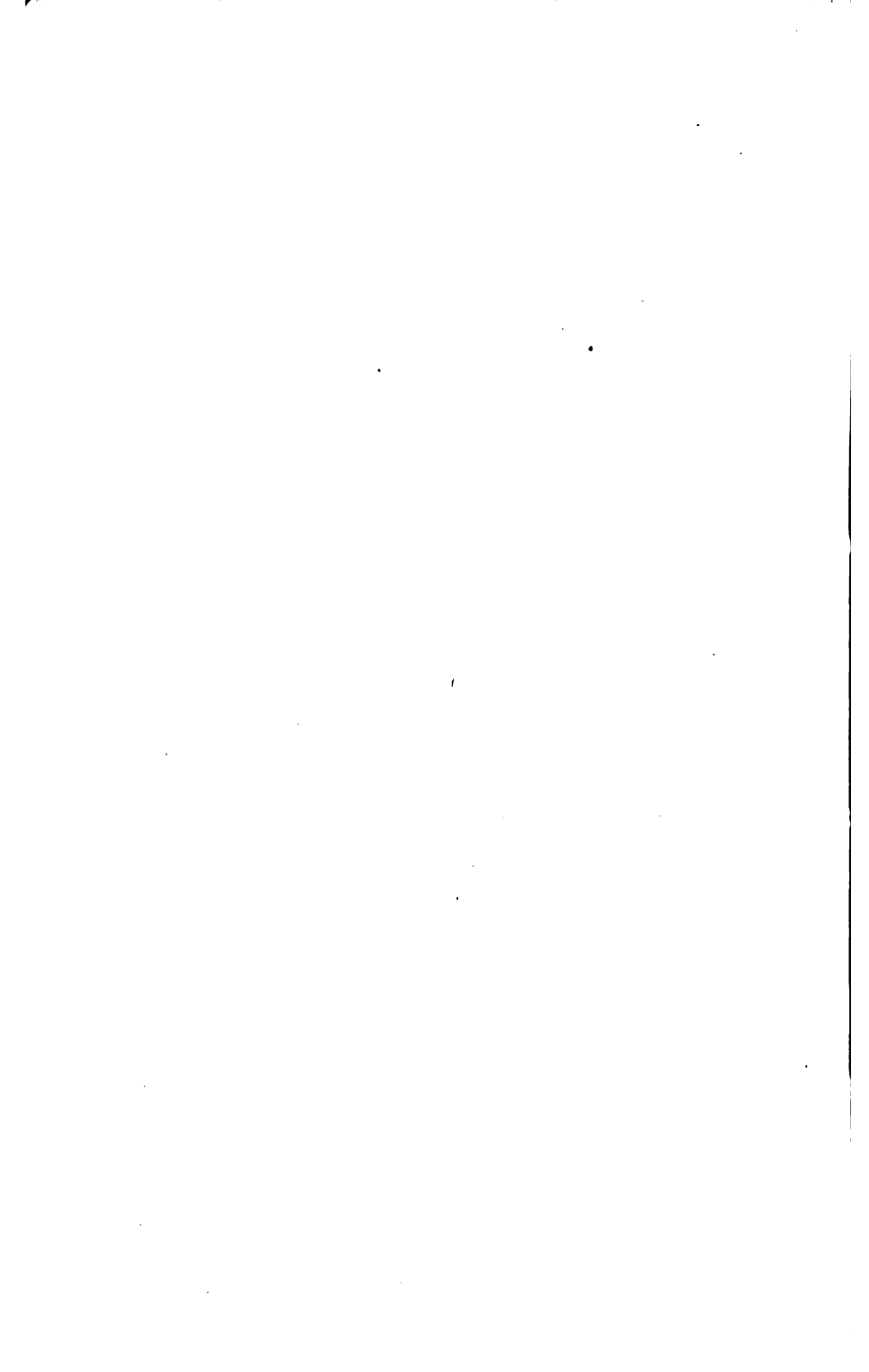
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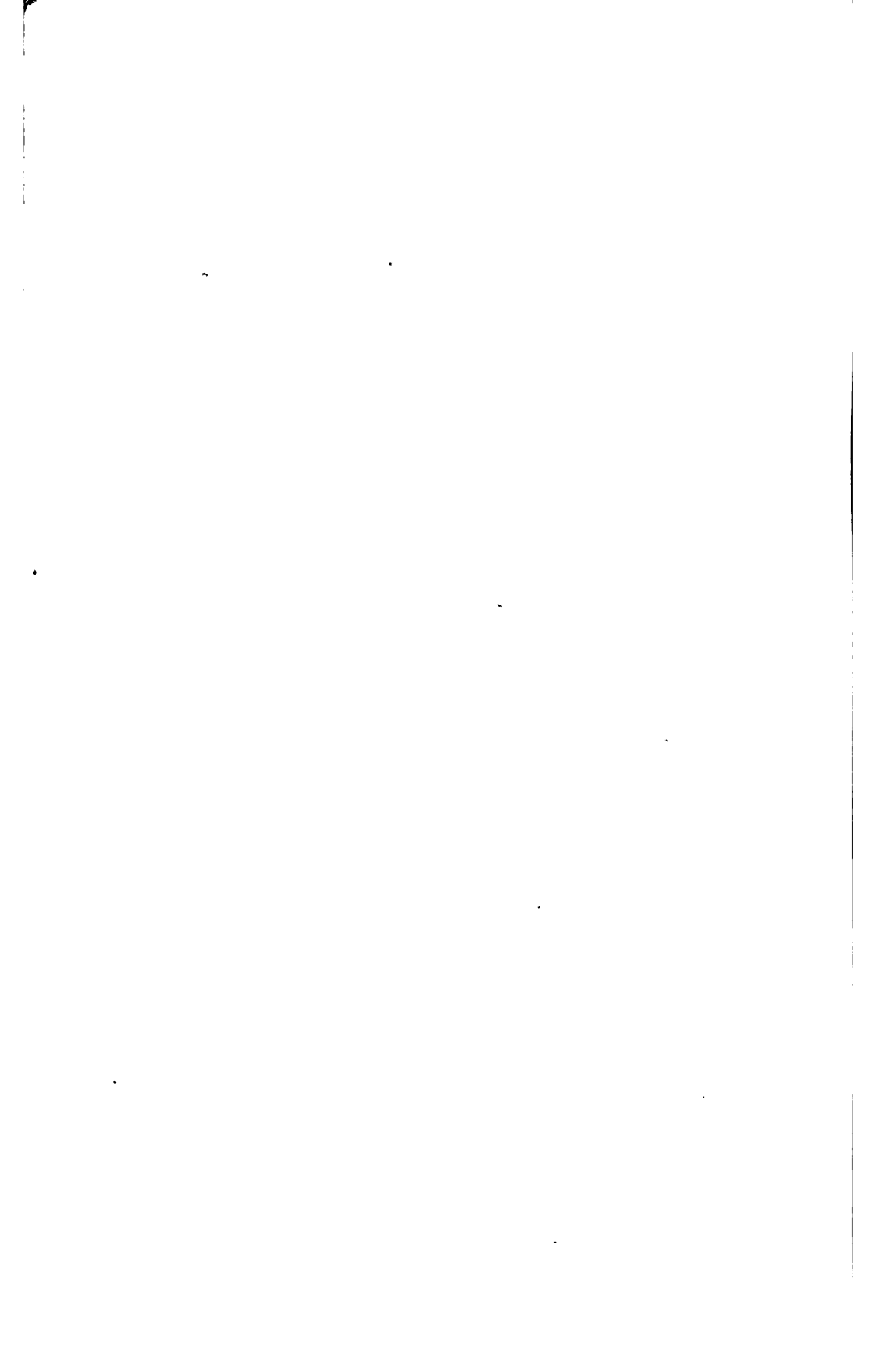
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PREFACE



PREFACE

"THE ODYSSEY" has many repetitions and much needless detail. These have been omitted in this arrangement, which aims to tell in the most direct manner only the adventures of Ulysses and his son, and events directly connected therewith.

All that interrupts the main story has been omitted; that which belongs to it directly, and the sidelights that illuminate it, have been retained. The aim has been swift action and vivid detail. Nothing which would make the story clearer has been left out; little which diffuses its interest has been included.

In making a choice of translations, obscurity and stilted expression have been, so far as possible, avoided. Chapman is archaic, sometimes obscure, frequently forced and commonplace. Pope is rhetorical, artificial, insincere. Cowper seldom soars, and often drops to feebleness; and at times he ruins an otherwise noble rendering by a bombastic word or sentiment. Worsley's translation reaches a high poetic level, and has great literary merit; but the thought is entangled by intricate meter and rhyme, which make clear and direct expression hard, and often compel inversion, big words and obscurity.

Bryant is as clear and limpid as a mountain brook. He is never obscure, never artificial. The art of the story-teller is to stir emotion by simple directness; the art of the poet is to add beauty to simplicity. Bryant alone, of all the translators of "The Odyssey," preserves

PREFACE

both the poetic beauty and the narrative simplicity of the great Greek poet-story-teller. On the other hand, his gentleness is overmatched when Homer flames; and Bryant seldom equals the original in fire.

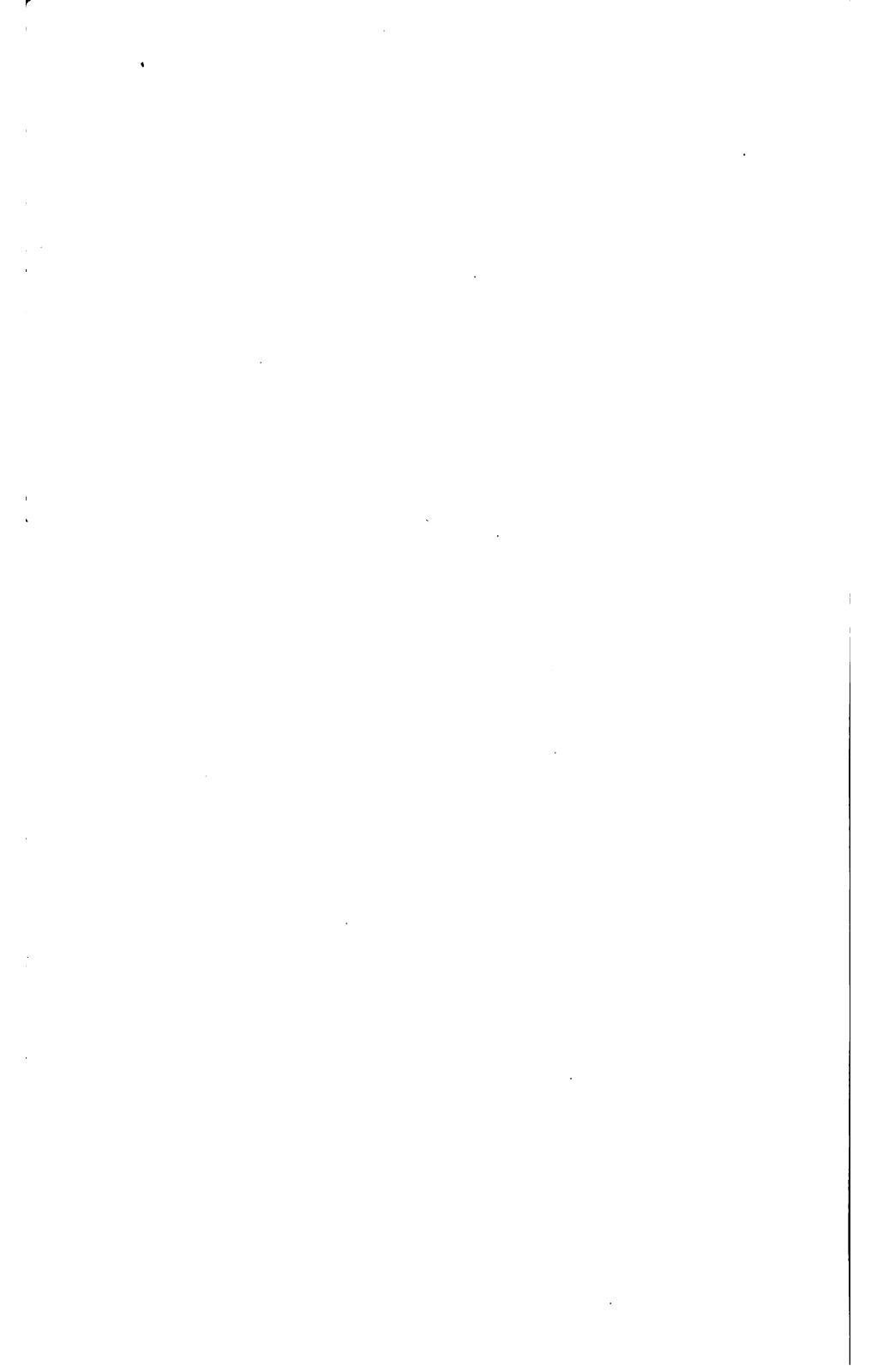
For the general reader, Bryant's version is by far the best in directness of narration, clearness, and uniformly high poetic quality. Cowper's has similar merits, but is on a lower poetic plane, with frequent lapses. Worsley's is strong, beautiful and often powerful, but complex. Pope's is, for the most part, neither good story-telling nor good poetry.

The extracts in this volume from Bryant's Translation of Homer's "Odyssey" are reprinted by permission of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., the authorized publishers, by whose liberal courtesy the Editor is enabled to make free choice of the many selections required by the plan of arrangement.

EDITOR.

CRITICAL SYNOPSIS

Vol. 9—1



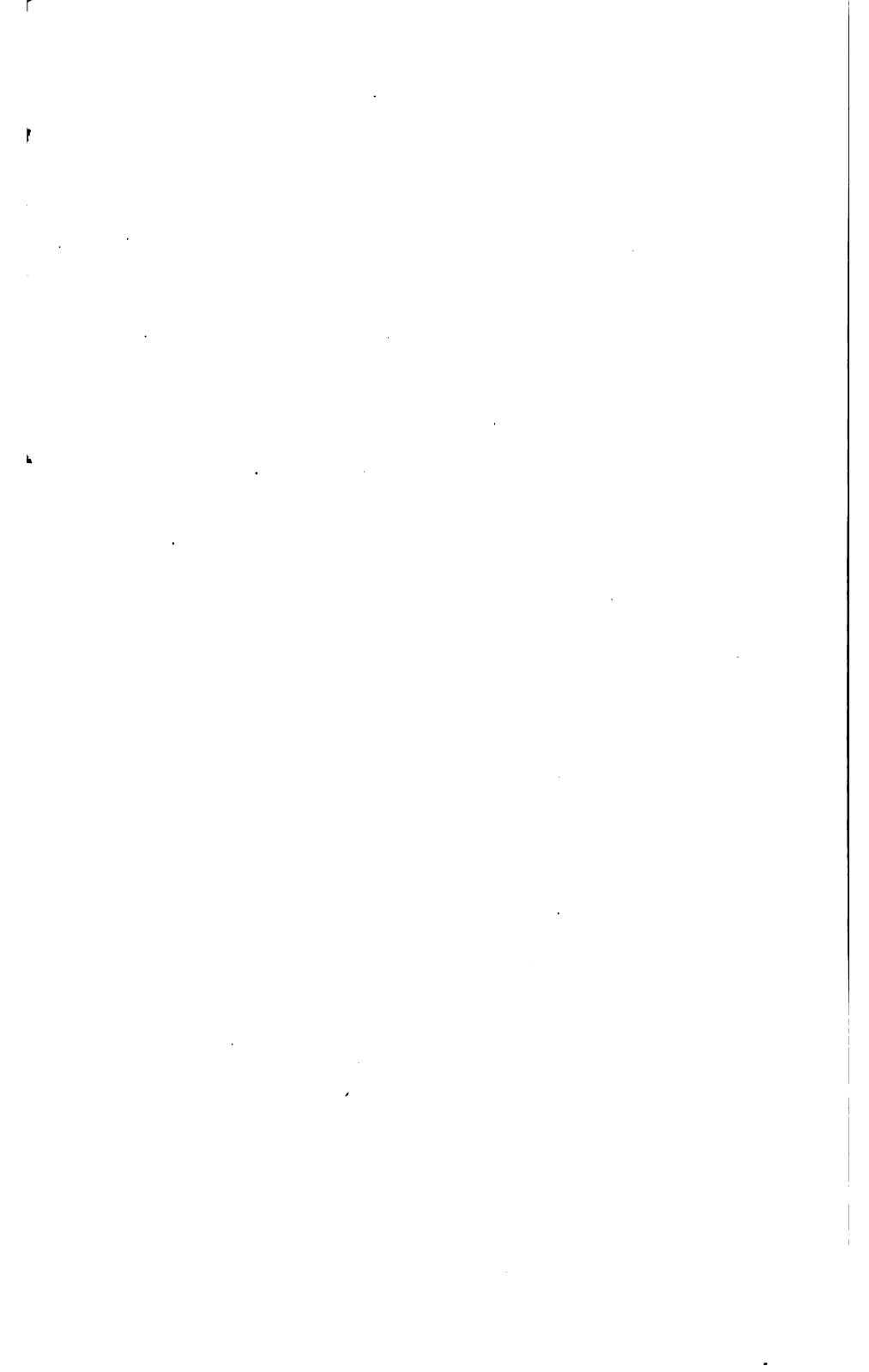
CRITICAL SYNOPSIS

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER: TRANSLATIONS BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

During the long siege of Troy many of the Greeks incurred the enmity of the gods by various acts of defiance or neglect. Among these was Ulysses, or Odysseus, wildest of the Greeks and one of the bravest of chiefs. After the fall of Troy, seeking to return to his home, he was pursued by the unrelenting hate of Neptune, God of the Ocean, and for ten long years was buffeted hither and thither across trackless wastes of water, suffered many perils by land and sea, had many strange adventures among savage peoples, and returned alone, unrecognized and in distress, to his native isle of Ithaca, to find his kingdom threatened by a swarm of suitors, who sought in marriage the hand of his faithful wife, Penelope. "The Odyssey" tells the tale of his wanderings and of his return; how, landing upon the rocky isle of Ithaca, he made himself known to his son, Telemachus; how the two, aided by the Goddess Pallas, the great chief being disguised as a strolling beggar, entered the hall where the suitors were feasting, and executed a bloody vengeance upon those who were wasting his substance, threatening his son's life, and seeking to force his beloved queen into a hateful marriage with one of their number.

EDITOR.

BIOGRAPHICAL
DICTIONARY OF AUTHORS



BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF AUTHORS

BRYANT, WILLIAM CULLEN: (For Biographical Note, see Vol. VII., "The Iliad.")

CHAPMAN, GEORGE: (For Biographical Note, see Vol. III., "Famous Tales of Heroism.")

CHURCH, ALFRED J.: (For Biographical Note, see Vol. VII., "The Iliad.")

COWPER, WILLIAM: This celebrated English poet was born November 15, 1731, at Great Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire; in 1763 developed temporary mental aberration, which recurred thereafter at intervals until he became permanently insane, and died at East Dereham, Norfolk, April 25, 1800. He was of morbid and melancholy temperament, abnormally sensitive and prone to religious excitement, and when appointed to a minor political office in 1759, his anxious scruples as to his fitness caused suicidal mania, from which he recovered after confinement. He remained a recluse during most of his life, his lucid intervals being devoted to literary labors. His first published work, a controversial pamphlet, appeared in 1781, when he was fifty years old. In 1782 he published "Poems;" in 1785, "The Task" and other poems appeared, followed by translations of "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey" (1791), and several volumes of poems and miscellaneous writings, some of which were published after his death.

HOMER: (For Biographical Note, see Vol. VII., "The Iliad.")

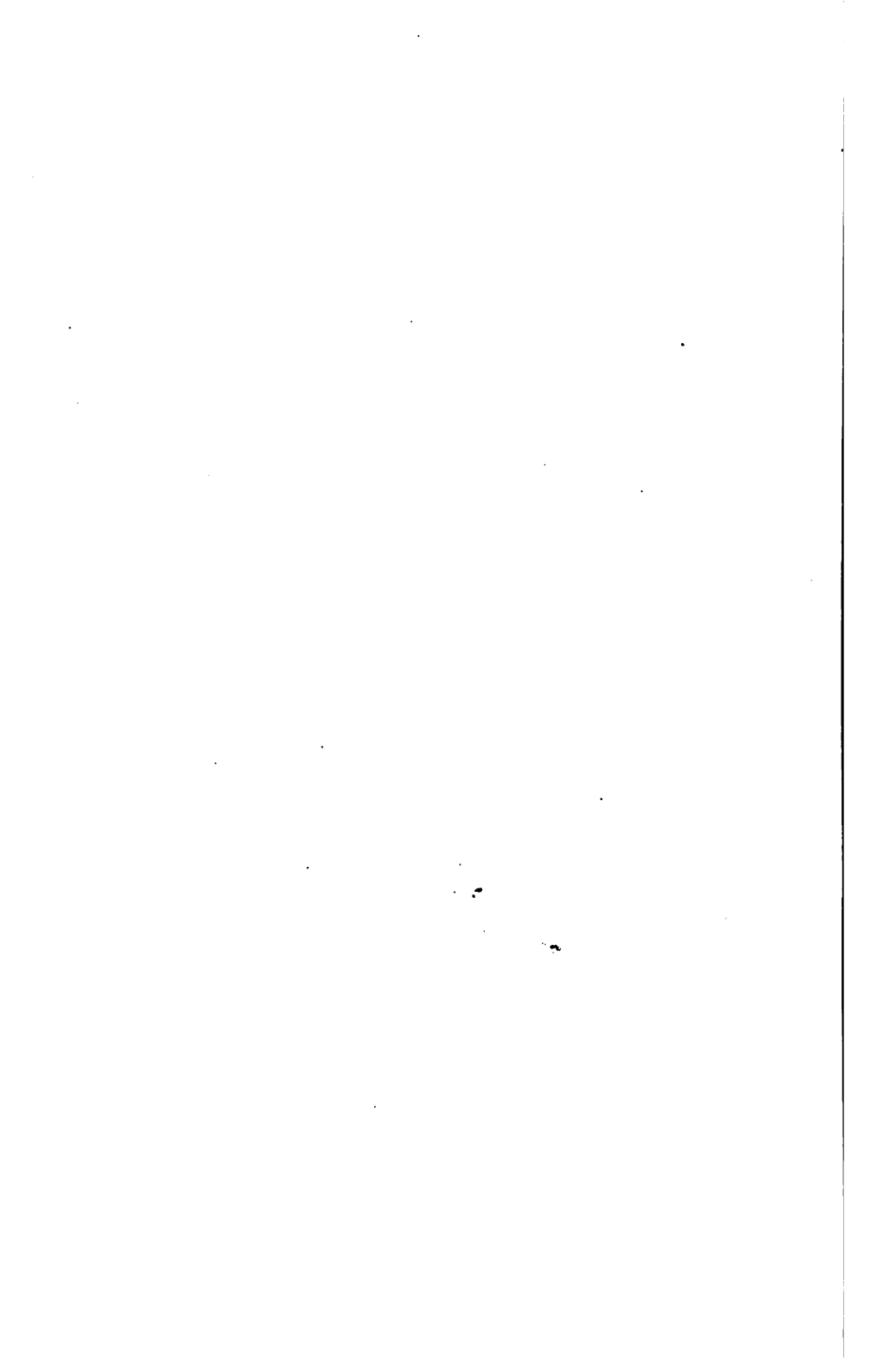
POPE, ALEXANDER: (For Biographical Note, see Vol. VII., "The Iliad.")

BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF AUTHORS

WORSLEY, PHILIP STANHOPE: An English poet and classical scholar, born at Greenwich, August 12, 1835; died at Freshwater, May 8, 1865. He studied at Oxford from 1853 until 1861, when he was graduated with honors. In 1857 he was awarded the Newdigate prize for the poem entitled "The Temple of Janus." His delicate health debarred any active pursuit or profession, and he devoted himself wholly to scholarly pursuits. His collected poems were first published in 1863, under the title "Poems and Translations." His most notable productions are translations, chief among which is "The Odyssey" of Homer. Although his original works possess marked beauty of diction, they are characterized by graceful expression and refinement, rather than by virility of thought.

EDITOR.

BOOK I



BOOK I: PART I

THE STORY

WHEN the great city of Troy was taken, all the chiefs who had fought against it set sail for their homes. But there was wrath in heaven against them, for indeed they had borne themselves haughtily and cruelly in the day of their victory. Therefore they did not all find a safe and happy return. For one was shipwrecked, and another was shamefully slain by his false wife in his palace, and others found all things at home troubled and changed, and were driven to seek new dwellings elsewhere. And some, whose wives and friends and people had been still true to them through those ten long years of absence, were driven far and wide about the world before they saw their native land again. And of all, the wise Ulysses was he who wandered farthest and suffered most.

The Sea-God Neptune bore bitter wrath against Ulysses, and strove mightily to destroy him by tempest and wave, or at the least to prevent his return to his home. His ships and companions lost, Ulysses was cast upon the isle of the sea-nymph Calypso, who for long years detained him, much against his will, thinking always of his home and his wife and his young son. And when the seven years were ended, Athené, who had ever loved him much, spake Zeus, complaining much that one so wise had been so long balked of his return.

THE ODYSSEY.

Then said Zeus that it should not be so any longer, for that Poseidon must give up his wrath against the man, if all the other gods were of one mind.

Then said Athené to Zeus, "Do thou send Hermes, thy messenger, to Calypso, that she let Ulysses depart, and I will go to Ithaca to Telemachus, to bid him go search for his father; for indeed it is but seemly that he should do so, now that he is come to man's estate."

So she went to Ithaca, and there she took upon her the form of Mentor, who was chief of the Taphians.

Now there were gathered in the house of Ulysses many princes from the islands, suitors of the Queen Penelopé, for they said that Ulysses was dead, and that she should choose another husband. These were gathered together, and were sitting playing draughts and feasting. And Telemachus sat among them, vexed at heart, for they wasted his substance, neither was he master in his house. But when he saw the guest at the door, he rose from his place and welcomed him, and made him sit down, and commanded that they should give him food and wine. And when he had ended his meal, Telemachus asked him of his business.

Thereupon the false Mentor said, "My name is Mentor, and I am King of the Taphians, and I am sailing to Cyprus for copper, taking iron in exchange. Now I have been long time the friend of this house, of thy father and thy father's father, and I came trusting to see thy father, for they told me that he was here. But now I see that some god has hindered his return, for that he lives I know full well."

And after this the two had much talk together, and Athené gave good counsel to Telemachus, and chiefly that he should go to Pylos, to old Nestor, and to Sparta, where Menelaüs dwelt, if haply he might hear aught of his father in this place or in that. And after

THE ODYSSEY.

this she departed; and as she went, Telemachus knew her who she was.

The next day the people of Ithaca were called to an assembly. And Telemachus stood up among them and said—

“I have great trouble in my heart, men of Ithaca, for first my father is not, whom ye all loved; and next, the princes of the islands come hither, making suit to my mother, but she waits ever for her husband, when he shall return. And they devour all our substance, nor is Ulysses here to defend it, and I, in truth, am not able. And this is a grievous wrong, and not to be borne”

Then he dashed his sceptre on the ground, and sat down weeping.

BOOK I: PART II

THE POEM

[The Long Wanderings of Ulysses, Driven by the
Wrath of Neptune.](—(COWPER.)

MUSE, make the man thy theme, for shrewdness
famed

And genius versatile, who far and wide
A Wanderer, after Ilium overthrown,
Discovered various cities, and the mind
And manners learn'd of men in lands remote.
He numerous woes, on Ocean toss'd, endured,
Anxious to save himself, and to conduct
His followers to their home; yet all his care
Preserved them not; they perish'd self-destroy'd
By their own fault; infatuate! who devour'd
The oxen of the all-o'erseeing Sun,
And, punish'd for that crime, return'd no more.
Daughter divine of Jove, these things record,
As it may please thee, even in our ears.

The rest, all those who had perdition 'scaped
By war or on the Deep, dwelt now at home;
Him only, of his country and his wife
Alike desirous, in her hollow grots
Calypso, Goddess beautiful, detain'd
Wooring him to her arms. But when, at length,

THE ODYSSEY.

(Many a long year elapsed,) the year arrived
Of his return (by the decree of Heaven)
To Ithaca, not even then had he,
Although surrounded by his people, reach'd
The period of his sufferings and his toils.
Yet all the Gods, with pity moved, beheld
His woes, save Neptune; He alone with wrath
Unceasing and implacable pursued
Godlike Ulysses to his native shores.

[Pallas, for Pity of Ulysses, Implores Jove to Permit Him to Reach His Home.](—(COWPER.)

The Gods

In Jove's abode, meantime, assembled all,
'Midst whom the Sire of heaven and earth began,
For he recalled to mind Ægisthus slain
By Agamemnon's celebrated son
Orestes, and retracing in his thought
That dread event, the Immortals thus address'd;
"Alas! how prone are human-kind to blame
The Powers of Heaven! From us, they say, proceed
The ills which they endure, yet more than Fate
Herself inflicts, by their own crimes incur."

* * * *

Whom answer'd then Pallas cœrulean-eyed;
"Oh Jove, Saturnian Sire, o'er all supremel
And well he merited the death he found;
So perish all who shall, like him, offend.
But with a bosom anguish-rent I view
Ulysses, hapless Chief, who from his friends
Remote, affliction hath long time endured
In yonder woodland isle, the central boss
Of Ocean. That retreat a Goddess holds,
Daughter of sapient Atlas, who the abyss
Knows to its bottom, and the pillars high

THE ODYSSEY.

Himself upbears which separate earth from heaven.
His daughter, there, the sorrowing Chief detains,
And ever with smooth speech insidious seeks
To wean his heart from Ithaca; meantime
Ulysses, happy might he but behold
The smoke ascending from his native land,
Death covets. Canst thou not, Olympian Jove!
At last relent? Hath not Ulysses oft
With victims slain amid Achaia's fleet
Thee gratified while yet at Troy he fought?
How hath he then so deep incensed thee, Jove?"

To whom the cloud-assembler God replied:
"What word hath pass'd thy lips, Daughter beloved?
Can I forget Ulysses? Him forget
So noble, who in wisdom all mankind
Excels, and who hath sacrificed so oft
To us whose dwelling is the boundless heaven!
Earth-circling Neptune—he it is whose wrath
Pursues him ceaseless, for the Cyclops' sake,
Polypheme, strongest of the giant race,
Whom of his eye Ulysses hath deprived.

* * * *

E'er since that day, the Shaker of the shores,
Although he slay him not, yet devious drives
Ulysses from his native isle afar.
Yet come—in full assembly his return
Contrive we now, both means and prosperous end;
So Neptune shall his wrath remit, whose power
In contest with the force of all the Gods
Exerted single, can but strive in vain."

To whom Minerva, Goddess azure-eyed;
"Oh Jupiter! above all Kings enthroned!
If the Immortals ever-blest ordain
That wise Ulysses to his home return,
Dispatch we then Hermes the Argicide,
Our messenger, hence to Ogygia's isle,

THE ODYSSEY.

Who shall inform Calypso, nymph divine,
Of this our fix'd resolve, that to his home
Ulysses, toil-enduring Chief, repair.
Myself will hence to Ithaca, meantime,
His son to animate and with new force
Inspire, that (the Achaians all convened
In council,) he may instant bid depart
The suitors from his home, who day by day
His numerous flocks and fatted herds consume.
And I will send him thence to Sparta forth,
And into sandy Pylus, there to hear
(If hear he may) some tidings of his Sire,
And to procure himself a glorious name."

[Pallas Flies to Aid Telemachus, the Young Son of
Ulysses, Despoiled by a Throng of Suitors
Seeking to Wed Queen Penelope.](—CHAP-
MAN.)

This said, her wing'd shoes to her feet she tied,
Form'd all of gold, and all eternified,
That on the round earth or the sea sustain'd
Her ravish'd substance swift as gusts of wind.
Then took she her strong lance with steel made keen,
Great, massy, active, that whole hosts of men,
Though all heroës, conquers, if her ire
Their wrongs inflame, back'd by so great a Sire.
Down from Olympus' tops she headlong div'd,
And swift as thought in Ithaca arriv'd,
Close at Ulysses' gates; in whose first court
She made her stand, and, for her breast's support,
Lean'd on her iron lance; her form imprest
With Mentas' likeness, come as being a guest.
There found she those proud woers, that were then
Set on those ox-hides that themselves had slain,
Before the gates, and all at dice were playing.

THE ODYSSEY.

To them the heralds, and the rest obeying,
Fill'd wine and water; some, still as they play'd,
And some, for solemn supper's state, purvey'd,
With porous sponges cleansing tables, serv'd
With much rich feast; of which to all they kerv'd.

[Telemachus Makes Welcome the Disguised Goddess.]—(WORSLEY.)

* * * *

First of them all Telemachus did view
The stranger; for bowed down, at grief and still,
He with the suitors sat, they banqueting at will.

There in his mind's eye shaping forth his sire,
He marvelled if from somewhere he would smite
The suitors, and make scattering in his ire
Of these who wrought his house such fell despite,
And earn huge honor, and assert his right,
And in the end bear rule among his own.
Thus dreaming, as he sat, his eyes did light
On one who waited in the porch alone.

He, rising, with swift steps thither did wend anon,

As grieved in soul to see a stranger stand
So long the portals of his house before.
And he drew near, and taking her right hand
Received the steel-tipped weapon which she bore,
And thus in wingéd words: "Stranger, good store
Of welcome!—taste thou first our cheer; and I
Will of thy matter afterward explore."
So passed within the palace vaulted high,
(She following), and the spear set in the stand hard by

A pillar tall, whereon the shaft might lean,
Even in the polished stand where many a spear

THE ODYSSEY.

Of travail-spent Odysseus long had been;
Then led the goddess to a stately chair
Elaborate, and beneath on carpet fair
Duly was placed a footstool for the feet;
Next, for himself, a bench of carvings rare
Planted, convenient from the noise and heat,
Lest, fall'n on insult rude, the guest should loathe his
meat;

* * * *

And lo! came in, for noisy wassail bound,
The suitors; each at once his station found
For order of the revel, bench or chair;
To whom the bustling heralds handed round
Water to wash, nor did the maidens spare
Of food in baskets huge, and comely youths and fair

To crown the beakers to the brim with wine.
They eager hands upon the viands laid
And fed; but when the craving did decline,
Straightway their minds a new desire obeyed—
For dance and song; for with these charms arrayed
The feast flows smoother. Then the herald gave
The harp to one who sang perforce and played,
Even to Phemius, bard and minstrel brave,
Who straight with voice and lyre struck up the noble
stave.

[Pallas Predicts the Speedy Return of Ulysses.]—
(CHAPMAN.)

Telemachus to Pallas then (apart,
His ear inclining close, that none might hear)
In this sort said: "My guest, exceeding dear,
Will you not sit incens'd with what I say?
These are the cares these men take; feast and play.
Which eas'ly they may use, because they eat,

THE ODYSSEY.

Free and unpunish'd, of another's meat;
And of a man's, whose white bones wasting lie
In some far region, with th' incessancy
Of show'rs pour'd down upon them, lying ashore,
Or in the seas wash'd nak'd. Who, if he wore
Those bones with flesh and life and industry,
And these might here in Ithaca set eye
On him return'd, they all would wish to be
Either past other in celerity
Of feet and knees, and not contend t' exceed
In golden garments. But his virtues feed
The fate of ill death; nor is left to me
The least hope of his life's recovery,
No, not if any of the mortal race
Should tell me his return; the cheerful face
Of his return'd day never will appear.
But tell me, and let Truth your witness bear,
Who, and from whence you are? What city's birth?
What parents? In what vessel set you forth?
And with what mariners arriv'd you here?"

* * * *

On him again the grey-eyed Maid did pass
This kind reply: "I'll answer passing true
All thou hast ask'd: The name I bear
Is Mentas, the commanding islander
Of all the Taphians studious in the art
Of navigation; having touch'd this part
With ship and men, of purpose to maintain
Course through the dark seas t' other-languag'd men;

* * * *

Thy sire and I were ever mutual guests,
At either's house still interchanging feasts.

* * * *

And (as th' Immortals prompt me at this hour)
I'll tell thee, out of a prophetic pow'r,

* * * *

THE ODYSSEY.

Divine Ulysses, yet, abides not dead
Above earth, nor beneath, nor buried
In any seas, as you did late conceive,
But, with the broad sea sieg'd, is kept alive
Within an isle by rude and upland men,
That in his spite his passage home detain.
Yet long it shall not be before he tread
His country's dear earth, though solicited,
And held from his return, with iron chains;
For he hath wit to forge a world of trains,
And will, of all, be sure to make good one
For his return, so much relied upon."

[Pallas, Observing the Riotous Excess of the
Suitors, Inquires Its Occasion.](—COWPER.)

Then answer thus Pallas blue-ey'd return'd;
"From no ignoble race, in future days,
The Gods shall prove thee sprung, whom so endow'd
With every grace Penelope hath borne.
But tell me true. What festival is this?
This throng—whence are they? wherefore hast thou
need

Of such a multitude? Behold I here
A banquet, or a nuptial feast? for these
Meet not by contribution to regale,
With such brutality and din they hold
Their riotous banquet! A wise man and good
Arriving, now, among them, at the sight
Of such enormities would much be wroth."

To whom replied Telemachus discreet:
"Since, stranger! thou hast ask'd, learn also this.
While yet Ulysses with his people dwelt,
His presence warranted the hope that here
Virtue should dwell and opulence; but Heaven
Hath cast for us, at length, a different lot,
And he is lost, as never man before.

* * * * *

THE ODYSSEY.

Nor mourn I for his sake alone; the Gods
Have plann'd for me still many a woe beside;
For all the rulers of the neighbor isles,
Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd
Zacynthus, others also, rulers here
In craggy Ithaca, my mother seek
In marriage, and my household stores consume.
But neither she those nuptial rites abhorr'd
Refuses absolute, nor yet consents
To end them; they my patrimony waste
Meantime, and will not long spare even me."

[The Goddess Counsels Telemachus to Warn the
Suitors to Depart, and Seek Tidings of Ulysses,
from Nestor and Menelaüs.](COWPER.)

To whom, with deep commiseration panged,
Pallas replied: "Alas! great need hast thou
Of thy long-absent father to avenge
These numerous wrongs; for could he now appear
There, at yon portal, arm'd with helmet, shield,
And grasping his two spears, such as when first
I saw him drinking joyous at our board,

* * * *

Could now, Ulysses, clad in arms as then,
Mix with these suitors, short his date of life
To each, and bitter should his nuptials prove.
But these events, whether he shall return
To take just vengeance under his own roof,
Or whether not, lie all in the Gods' lap.
Meantime I counsel thee, thyself to think
By what means likeliest thou shalt expel
These from thy doors. Now mark me: close attend.
To-morrow, summoning the Grecian Chiefs
To council, speak to them, and call the Gods
To witness that solemnity. Bid go

THE ODYSSEY.

The suitors hence, each to his own abode,
Thy mother—if her purpose be resolved
On marriage, let her to the house return
Of her own potent father, who, himself,
Shall furnish forth her matrimonial rites,
And ample dower, such as it well becomes
A darling daughter to receive, bestow.
But hear me now; thyself I thus advise.
The prime of all thy ships preparing, mann'd
With twenty rowers, voyage hence to seek
Intelligence of thy long-absent Sire.
Some mortal may inform thee, or a word,
Perchance, by Jove directed (safest source
Of notice to mankind) may reach thine ear.
First voyaging to Pylus, there enquire
Of noble Nestor; thence to Sparta tend,
To question Menelaüs amber-hair'd,
Latest arrived of all the host of Greece.
There should'st thou learn that still thy father lives,
And hope obtain of his return, although
Distress'd, thou wilt be patient yet a year.
But should'st thou there hear tidings that he breathes
No longer, to thy native isle return'd,
First heap his tomb; then with such pomp perform
His funeral rites as his great name demands,
And make thy mother's spousals, next, thy care.
These duties satisfied, deliberate last
Whether thou shalt these troublers of thy house
By stratagem, or by assault, destroy:
For thou art now no child, nor longer mayest
Sport like one. * * *

Oh my friend!

(For with delight thy vigorous growth I view,
And just proportion,) be thou also bold,
And merit praise from ages yet to come.
But I will to my vessel now repair,

THE ODYSSEY.

And to my mariners, whom, absent long,
I may perchance have troubled. 'Weigh thou well
My counsel: let not my advice be lost.'

Pallas is Revealed to Telemachus, and Encouraged by Celestial Aid, He Denounces the Suitors. — WORSLEY.

So did she speak, and vanished like a bird
In wing, sunk in very deed divine,
And him, there gazing as she disappeared,
To strengthen and rally valor she did name,
And with his father's memory renew
His spirit yet more than in the former days.
He all the while, made certain by the sign,
Mused on Athena, silent with awe—
Then with the suitors mixed, right glad he took his seat.

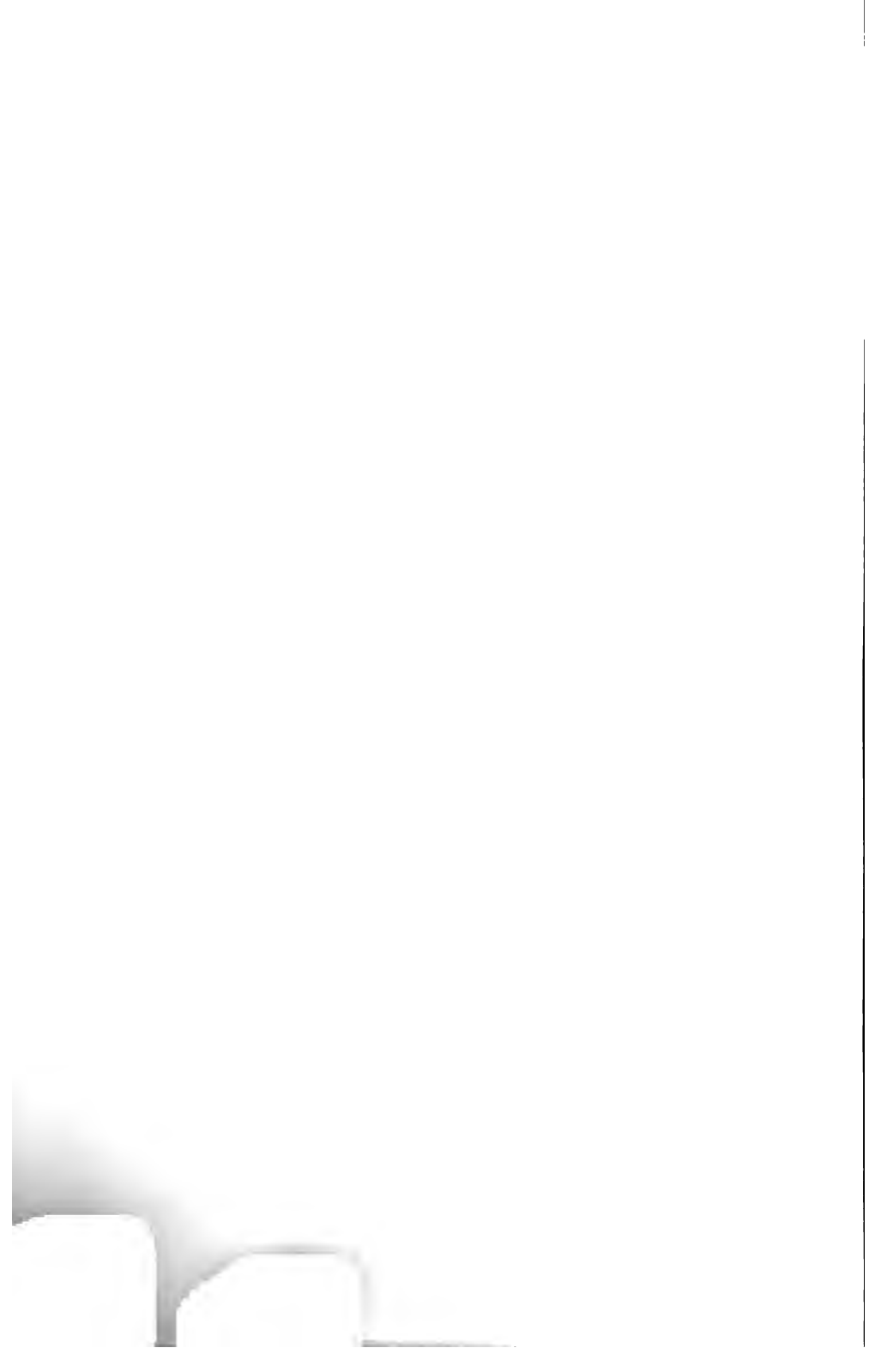
But through the shadowy halls the suitors sang
Mix'd louder while they feasted on lives and rest,
To whom, hurrying as the voices ring,
Perceiv'd Telemachus the word addressed.
'Ye suitors, how much longer, perchance, will last
That ye should feast on mine and father's store,
Leaving no music and a better host,
For this alone is left to me and mine,
That, when ye leave us, ye may find us gone.'

To-morrow, if ye will, shall ye depart:
There will I stand, and see ye on your way,
And if ye find me, ye shall find me gone,
For I shall leave you, and my father's house,
And go to seek my father, and my home,
And if ye find me, ye shall find me gone.

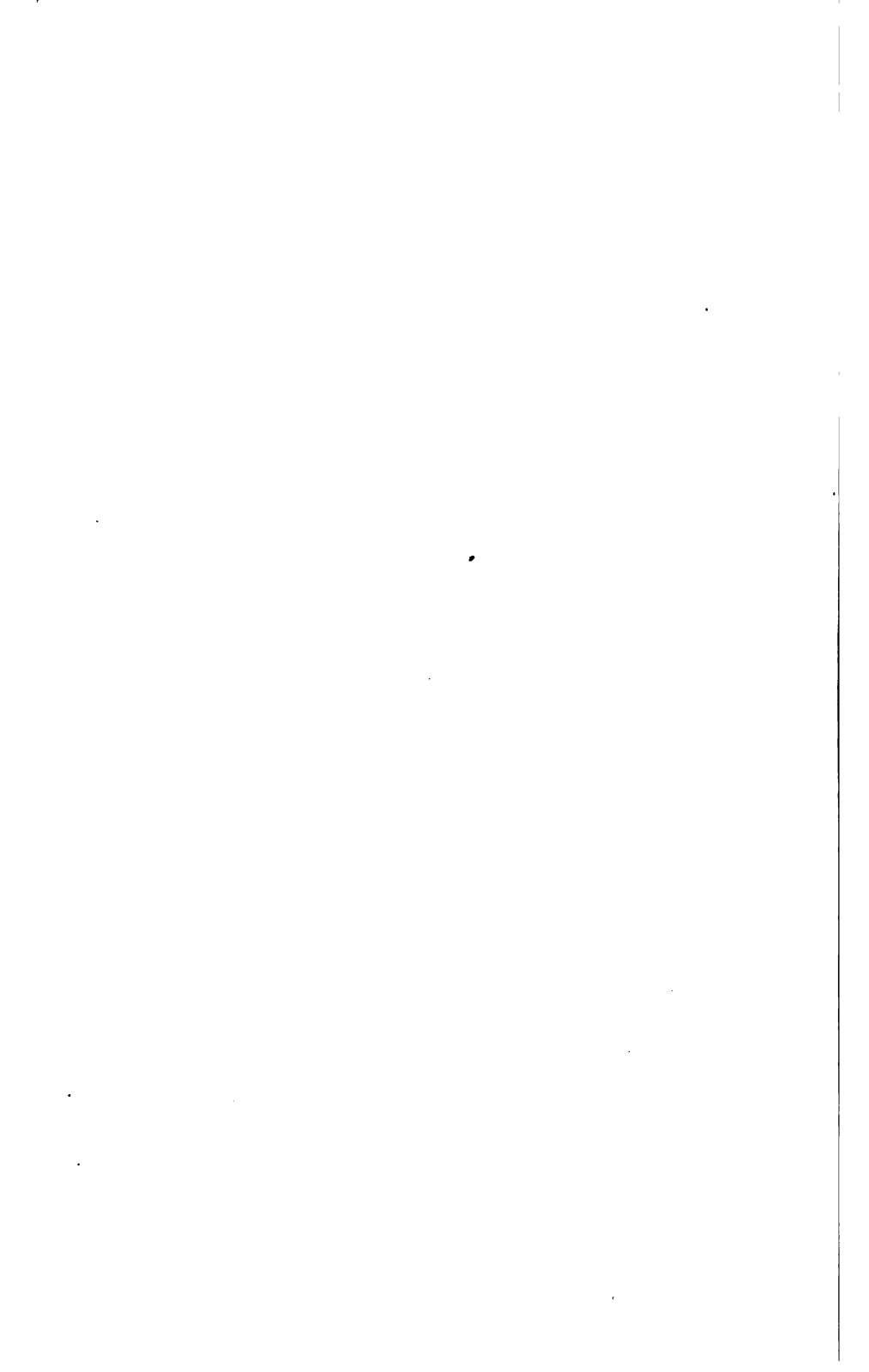
THE ODYSSEY.

Scatheless, then waste—but I with prayers intense
Zeus and the gods will ask, for all things done,
That unavenged, unwept, ye perish one by one."

He ended, but the rest in wrath did bite
Their lips, and wondered that he spake so bold.



BOOK II



BOOK II: PART I

THE STORY

WHEN Prince Antinoüs, who was one of the suitors, rose up and said—

“Nay, Telemachus, blame not us, but blame thy mother, who indeed is crafty above all women. For now this is the fourth year that we have come suing for her hand, and she has cheated us with hopes. Hear now this that she did. She set up a great warp for weaving and she said to us, ‘Listen, ye that are my suitors. Hasten not my marriage till I finish this web to be a burial cloth for Laertes, for indeed it would be foul shame if he who has won great possessions should lack this honor.’ So she spake, and for three years she cheated us, for what she wove in the day she undid at night. But when the fourth year was come, one of her maidens told us of the matter, and we came upon her by night and found her undoing the web, even what she had woven in the day. Then did she finish it, much against her will. Send away, therefore, thy mother, and bid her marry whom she will. But till this be done we will not depart.”

Then answered Telemachus, “How can I send her away against her will, who bare me and brought me up? Much forfeit must I pay to Icarus, her father; ay, and the curses of my mother would abide on me. Wherefore I cannot do this thing.”

So he spake; and there came two eagles, which flew

THE ODYSSEY.

abreast till they came over the assembly. Then did they wheel in the air, and shook out from each many feathers, and tare each other, and so departed.

Then cried Alitherses, the soothsayer, "Beware, ye suitors, for great trouble is coming to you, and to others also. And as for Ulysses, I said when he went to Troy that he should return after twenty years; and so it shall be."

And when the suitors would not listen, Telemachus said, "Yet give me a ship and twenty rowers, that I may go to Pylos and to Sparta, if haply I may hear news of my father."

But this also they would not, and the assembly was dismissed.

But Telemachus went out to the sea-shore, and prayed to Athené that she would help him. And while he prayed, lo! she stood by him, having the shape of a certain Mentes, who indeed had spoken on his behalf in the assembly. And she said—

"Thou art not, I trow, without spirit and wit, and art like to be a true son of Ulysses and Penelopé. Wherefore I have good hopes that this journey of which thou speakest will not be in vain. But as for the suitors, think not of them, for they lack wisdom, nor know the doom that is even now close upon them. Go, therefore, and talk with the suitors as before, and get ready meat for a journey, wine and meal. And I will gather men who will offer themselves freely for the journey, and find a ship also, the best in Ithaca."

Then Telemachus returned to the house. And Antinoüs caught him by the hand and said, "Eat and drink, Telemachus, and we will find a ship and rowers for thee, that thou mayest go where thou wilt, to inquire for thy father."

But Telemachus answered, "Think ye that I will eat and drink with you, who so shamefully waste my sub-

THE ODYSSEY.

stance? Be sure of this, that I will seek vengeance against you, and if ye deny me a ship, I will even go with another man's."

So he spake, and dragged his hand from the hand of Antinous.

And another of the suitors said, "Now will Telemachus go and seek help against us from Pylos or from Sparta, or may be he will put poison in our cups, and so destroy us."

And another said, "Perchance he also will perish, as his father has perished. Then should we have much labor, even dividing all his substance, but the house should we give to his mother and to her husband."

So they spake, mocking him. But he went to the chamber of his father, in which were ranged many casks of old wine, and store of gold and bronze, and clothing and olive oil; and of these things the prudent Euryclea, who was the keeper of the house, had care. To her he spake, "Mother, make ready for me twelve jars of wine, not of the best, but of that which is next to it, and twenty measures of barley-meal. At even will I take them, when my mother sleeps, for I go to Pylos and Sparta, if perchance I may hear news of my father."

But the old woman said, weeping, "What meanest thou, being an only son, thus to travel abroad? Wilt thou perish, as thy father has perished? For this evil brood of suitors will devise means to slay thee and divide thy goods. Thou hadst better sit peaceably at home."

Then Telemachus said, "'Tis at the bidding of the gods I go. Only swear that thou wilt say nought to my mother till eleven or twelve days be past, unless perchance she should ask concerning me."

And the old woman swore that it should be so. And Telemachus went again among the suitors. But Athené, meanwhile, taking his shape, had gathered to-

THE ODYSSEY.

gether a crew, and also had borrowed a ship for the voyage. And lest the suitors should hinder the thing, she caused a deep sleep to fall upon them, that they slept where they sat. Then she came in the shape of Mentor to the palace, and called Telemachus forth, saying, "The rowers are ready; let us go."

So they two went together and came to the ship. And they sat on the stern together, and the rowers sat upon the benches. Then Athené caused a west wind to blow, and they raised the mast and set the sail, and all night long the ship ran before the wind.

BOOK II: PART II

THE POEM

[Prince Antinoüs Replies Bitterly that Queen Penelope Has Deluded the Suitors with False Promises, and Declares That They Will Remain Until She Makes a Choice.](—(COWPER.)

* * * *

MUTE the assembly sat;
Long time none dared to greet Telemachus
With answer rough, till of them all, at last,
Antinoüs, sole arising, thus replied.

“Telemachus, intemperate in harangue,
High-sounding orator! it is thy drift
To make us all odious; but the offence
Lies not with us the suitors; she alone
Thy mother, who in subtlety excels,
And deep-wrought subterfuge, deserves the blame.
It is already the third year, and soon
Shall be the fourth, since with delusive art
Practicing on their minds, she hath deceived
The Grecians; message after message sent
Brings hope to each, by turns, and promise fair,
But she, meantime, far otherwise intends.
Her other arts exhausted all, she framed
This stratagem; a web of amplest size

THE ODYSSEY.

And subtlest woof beginning, thus she spake:
'Princes, my suitors! since the noble Chief
Ulysses is no more, press not as yet
My nuptials; wait till I shall finish, first,
A funeral robe (lest all my threads decay)
Which for the ancient Hero I prepare,
Laërtes, looking for the mournful hour
When fate shall snatch him to eternal rest;
Else, I the censure dread of all my sex,
Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud.'
So spake the Queen, and unsuspecting, we
With her request complied. Thenceforth, all day
She wove the ample web, and by the aid
Of torches ravell'd it again at night.
Three years by such contrivance she deceived
The Grecians; but when (three whole years elapsed)
The fourth arrived, then conscious of the fraud,
A damsel of her train told all the truth,
And her we found ravelling the beauteous work.
Thus, through necessity she hath, at length,
Perform'd the task, and in her own despite.
Now, therefore, for the information clear
Of thee thyself, and of the other Greeks,
We answer. Send thy mother hence, with charge
That him she wed, on whom her father's choice
Shall fall, and whom she shall herself approve,
But if by long procrastination still
She persevere, wearing our patience out.

* * * *

Then know, that these her suitors will consume
So long thy patrimony and thy goods,
As she her present purpose shall indulge,
With which the Gods inspire her. Great renown
She to herself insures, but equal woe
And devastation of thy wealth to thee;
For neither to our proper works at home

THE ODYSSEY.

Go we, of that be sure, nor yet elsewhere,
Till him she wed, to whom she most inclines."

[Telemachus Threatens the Suitors With Future
Vengeance.](—(BRYANT.)

And then rejoined discreet Telemachus:
"Antinoüs, grievous wrong it were to send
Unwilling from this palace her who bore
And nursed me. Whether he be living yet
Or dead, my father is in distant lands;
And should I, of my own accord and will,
Dismiss my mother, I must make perforce
Icarus large amends, and that were hard.
And he would do me mischief, and the gods
Would send yet other evils on my head.
For then my mother, going forth, would call
On the grim Furies, and the general curse
Of all men would be on me. Think not I
Will ever speak that word. But if ye bear
A sense of injury for what is past,
Go from these halls; provide for other feasts,
Consuming what is yours, and visiting
Each other's homes in turn. But if it seem
To you the wiser and the better way
To plunder one man's goods, go on to waste
My substance. I shall call the eternal gods
To aid me, and, if Jupiter allow
Fit retribution for your crimes, ye die
Within this very palace unavenged."

* * *

[Telemachus Plans to Seek News of His Father,
Ulysses.](—(WORSLEY.)

"* * * All ye suitors, deaf to prayers and woe,
No more will I waste words upon you thus;

THE ODYSSEY.

These things the gods and all Achaians know.
Come, give me bark and crew, that I may go,
On this dear quest. To Pylos I would sail
And thence seek Sparta, if some tongue may show
News of my sire, or even a voice prevail
From Zeus, for still doth Rumor loudest fame entail.

"From whence if certain tidings I shall hear
And that my father liveth and will return,
Though sorely straitened I can wait a year.
But if the sorrow of his fall I learn,
Then to the dear old land whereto I yearn,
I, coming back, whatever else befall,
Will build his tomb and goodly offerings burn,
Fittest to grace a father's funeral,
And her some husband find, when rites are rendered
all."

[Aided by Pallas, Telemachus Secretly Makes
Ready for His Voyage.](—COWPER.)

Meantime, Telemachus from all resort
Retiring, in the surf of the grey Deep,
First laved his hands, then, thus to Pallas pray'd:

"O Goddess! who wast yesterday a guest
Beneath my roof, and didst enjoin me then
A voyage o'er the sable Deep in quest
Of tidings of my long-regretted Sire!
Which voyage, all in Ithaca, but most
The haughty suitors, obstinate impede,
Now hear my suit and gracious interpose!"

Such prayer he made; then Pallas, in the form,
And with the voice of Mentor, drawing nigh,
In accents wing'd, him kindly thus bespake:

THE ODYSSEY.

"Telemachus! thou shalt hereafter prove
Nor base, nor poor in talents. If, in truth,
Thou have received from heaven thy father's force
Instill'd into thee, and resemblest him
In promptness, both of action and of speech,
Thy voyage shall not useless be, or vain.

* * *

Heed not the suitors' projects; neither wise
Are they, nor just, nor aught suspect the doom
Which now approaches them, and in one day
Shall overwhelm them all. No long suspense
Shall hold thy purposed enterprise in doubt,
Such help from me, of old thy father's friend,
Thou shalt receive, who with a bark well-oar'd,
Will serve thee, and myself attend thee forth."

* * *

Then Pallas, Goddess azure-eyed, her thoughts
Elsewhere directing, all the city ranged
In semblance of Telemachus, each man
Exhorting, at the dusk of eve, to seek
The gallant ship, and from Noëmon, son
Renown'd of Phronius, ask'd, herself, a bark,
Which soon as ask'd, he promised to supply.

Now set the sun, and twilight dimm'd the ways,
When, drawing down his bark into the Deep,
He gave her all her furniture, oars, arms,
And tackle, such as well-built galleys bear,
Then moor'd her in the bottom of the bay.
Meantime, his mariners in haste repair'd
Down to the shore, for Pallas urged them on.

[The Sailing of Telemachus, Guided by Pallas.]—
(CHAPMAN.)

Yet still fresh projects laid the grey-eyed Dame.
Straight to the house she hasted, and sweet sleep

THE ODYSSEY.

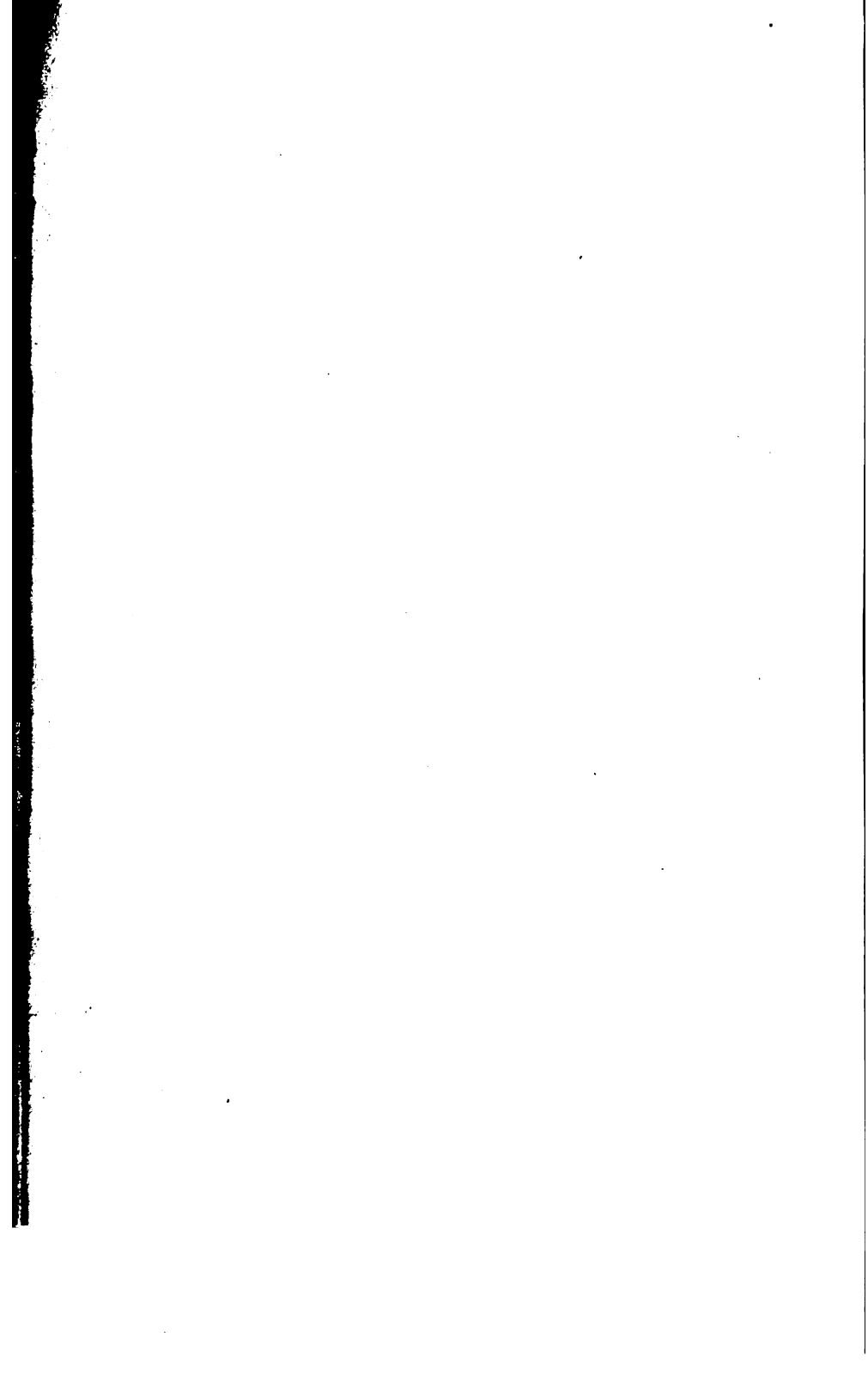
Pour'd on each Wooer; which so laid in steep
Their drowsy temples, that each brow did nod,
As all were drinking, and each hand his load,
The cup, let fall. All start up, and to bed,
Nor more would watch, when sleep so surfeited
Their leaden eye-lids. Then did Pallas call
Telemachus. * * *

Arrived at sea and ship, they found ashore
The soldiers that their fashion'd-long hair wore;
To whom the prince said: "Come, my friends, let's
bring

Our voyage's provision; ev'ry thing
Is heap'd together in our court; and none,
No not my mother, nor her maids, but one
Knows our intention." This express'd, he led,
The soldiers close together followéd;
And all together brought aboard their store.
Aboard the prince went; Pallas still before
Sat at the stern, he close to her, the men
Up hasted after. He and Pallas then
Put from the shore. * * *

A beechen mast, then, in the hollow base
They put, and hoisted, fix'd it in his place
With cables; and with well-wreath'd halsers hoise
Their white sails, which grey Pallas now employs
With full and fore-gales through the dark deep main.
The purple waves, so swift cut, roar'd again
Against the ship sides, that now ran and plow'd
The rugged seas up. Then the men bestow'd
Their arms about the ship, and sacrifice
With crown'd wine-cups to th' endless Deities
They offer'd up. Of all yet thron'd above,
They most observ'd the grey-eyed seed of Jove;
Who, from the evening till the morning rose,
And all day long their voyage did dispose.

BOOK III



BOOK III: PART I

THE STORY

IN the morning they came to Pylos. And lo! there was a great sacrifice to Poseidon on the shore, nine companies of men, and five hundred men in each company, and to each nine oxen. And Nestor was there with his sons; and when he saw the two travelers he bade them welcome, and caused them to sit down and to eat and drink, not forgetting to pour out of the wine to King Poseidon. And this they did, praying that he would help them in the matter whereon they had come from their home.

And when the feast was ended, Nestor asked them of their names and business. So Telemachus told him that he was come seeking news of his father Ulysses. And Nestor praised him much that he spake so wisely, but of his father he could tell him nothing, only that he had stayed a while at Troy to do pleasure to King Agamemnon. Diomed, he said, had returned safe, and he himself to Pylos, and the Myrmidons, with the son of Achilles, and Philoctetes also, and Idomeneus. And Menelaüs also had come back to his home, after wanderings many and great. But of Ulysses no one knew anything at all. Then they talked of many things, and specially of King Agamemnon, how he had been slain and also avenged.

And when evening was come, Athené indeed departed (and they knew her as she went for a goddess),

THE ODYSSEY.

but Telemæhus remained, for he would go (for so Nestor advised) to Sparta, to inquire of King Menelaüs, being the latest returned of all the kings.

On the morrow Nestor held a sacrifice to Athené, and on the morrow after that Nestor bade his men yoke horses to a chariot, and Pisistratus, who was the youngest of his sons, took the reins, and Telemachus rode with him. And all that day they journeyed; and when the land grew dark they came to the city of Pheræ, where Diocles, son of Orsilochus, was king, and there they rested; and the next day, traveling again, came to Lacedæmon, to the palace of King Menelaüs.

BOOK III: PART II

THE POEM

[Telemachus and Pallas Come to Pylus, and Are
Made Welcome by King Nestor, the Com-
rade of Ulysses.]—(COWPER.)

THE sun, emerging from the lucid waves,
Ascended now the brazen vault with light
For the inhabitants of earth and heaven,
When in their bark at Pylus they arrived,
City of Neleus. On the shore they found
The people sacrificing; bulls they slew
Black without spot, to Neptune azure-hair'd.
* * * There Nestor sat,
And Nestor's sons, while busily the feast
Tending, his numerous followers roasted some
The viands, some transfix'd them with the spits.
They seeing guests arrived, together all
Advanced, and, grasping courteously their hands,
Invited them to sit; but first, the son
Of Nestor, young Pisistratus, approach'd,
Who, fastening on the hands of both, beside
The banquet placed them, where the beach was spread
With fleeces, and where Thrasymedes sat

His brother, and the hoary Chief his Sire.
To each a portion of the inner parts
He gave, then fill'd a golden cup with wine,

THE ODYSSEY.

Which, tasted first, he to the daughter bore
Of Jove the Thunderer. * * *

* * * To Telemachus she gave
The splendid goblet next. * * *
And now (the banquet from the spits withdrawn)
They next distributed sufficient share
To each, and all were sumptuously regaled.
At length (both hunger satisfied and thirst)
Thus Nestor, the Gerenian Chief, began:
"Now with more seemliness we may enquire,
After repast, what guests we have received.
Our guests! who are ye? Whence have ye the waves
Plough'd hither? Come ye to transact concerns
Commercial, or at random roam the Deep
Like pirates, who with mischief charged and woe
To foreign States, oft hazard life themselves?"

[Telemachus Implores News of His Father From
Nestor.](—(POPE.)

The youth, whom Pallas destined to be wise
And famed among the sons of men, replies:
"Inquir'st thou, father! from what coast we came?
(O grace and glory of the Grecian name!)
From where high Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Brown with o'er-arching shades and pendent woods,
Up to these shores our filial duty draws,
A private sorrow, not a public cause.
My sire I seek, where'er the voice of fame
Has told the glories of his noble name,
The great Ulysses; famed from shore to shore
For valor much, for hardy suffering more.
Long time with thee before proud Ilion's wall
In arms he fought: with thee beheld her fall.
Of all the chiefs, this hero's fate alone

THE ODYSSEY.

Has Jove reserved, unheard of, and unknown;
Whether in fields by hostile fury slain,
Or sunk by tempests in the gulfy main?
Of this to learn, oppress'd with tender fears,
Lo, at thy knee his suppliant son appears.
If or thy certain eye, or curious ear,
Have learnt his fate, the whole dark story clear:
And, oh! whate'er Heaven destined to betide,
Let neither flattery soothe, nor pity hide.
Prepared I stand: he was but born to try
The lot of man; to suffer, and to die.
Oh then, if ever through the ten years' war
The wise, the good Ulysses claim'd thy care;
If e'er he joined thy council, or thy sword,
True in his deed, and constant to his word;
Far as thy mind through backward time can see,
Search all thy stores of faithful memory:
'Tis sacred truth I ask, and ask of thee."

[Nestor Tells How the Strife of Agamemnon and
Menelaüs Divided the Greeks, Whereby He
Knows Not What Befel Ulysses.](—(BRY-
ANT.)

And Nestor the Gerenian knight replied:

* * * *

"After we had overthrown and spoiled
King Priam's lofty city, and set sail
For home, and by some heavenly power the Greeks
Were scattered, Jupiter ordained for them
A sad return. Menelaüs first
Bade all the Greeks prepare for their return
O'er the great deep. That counsel little pleased
King Agamemnon, who desired to keep
The people longer there, that he might soothe
By sacred hecatombs the fiery wrath

THE ODYSSEY.

Of Pallas. Fool! who could not see how vain
Were such persuasion, for the eternal gods
Are not soon won to change their purposes.
They stood disputing thus, with bitter words,
Till wrangling noisily on different sides
Rose up the well-armed Greeks. The ensuing night
We rested, but we cherished in our breasts
A mutual hate; so for our punishment
Had Jove ordained. With early morn we drew
Our ships to the great deep, and put our goods
And our deep-bosomed women all on board.
Yet half the host went not, but on the shore
Remained with Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
And shepherd of the people. All the rest
Embarked, weighed anchor, and sailed swiftly thence;
A deity made smooth the mighty deep,
And when we came to Tenedos we paid
Our offerings to the gods and longed for home—
Vainly; it pleased not unpropitious Jove
To favor our return, and once again
He sent among us strife. A part of us
Led by Ulysses, that sagacious prince,
To please Atrides Agamemnon turned
Their well-oared galleys back. But I, with all
The vessels of the fleet that followed me,
Fled on my way, perceiving that some god
Was meditating evil. With us fled,
Encouraging his men, the warlike son
Of Tydeus. * * *
* * * Then the wind blew strong and shrill,
And swiftly o'er the fishy gulfs our fleet
Flew on, and reached Geræstus in the night.
There, having passed the mighty deep, we made
To Neptune offerings of many a thigh
Of beeves. The fourth day dawned, and now the men
Of Diomed, the mighty horseman, son

THE ODYSSEY.

Of Tydeus, stopped at Argos with their fleet,
While I went on to Pylos with the wind,
Which never, from the moment that the god
First sent it o'er the waters, ceased to blow.

"So, my dear child, I reached my home, nor knew
Nor heard from others who among the Greeks
Was saved, or who had perished on the way."

[Nestor Relates How Menelaüs, After Long Wanderings, Has But Now Returned, and Counsels Telemachus to Seek Him.](—(COWPER.)

"But hence to Menelaüs is the course
To which I counsel thee; for he hath come
Of late from distant lands, whence to escape
No man could hope, whom tempests first had driven
Devious into so wide a sea, from which
Themselves the birds of heaven could not arrive
In a whole year, so vast is the expanse.
Go, then, with ship and shipmates, or if more
The land delight thee, steeds thou shalt not want
Nor chariot, and my sons shall be thy guides
To noble Lacedæmon, the abode
Of Menelaüs; ask from him the truth,
Who will not lie, for he is passing wise."

While thus he spake, the sun declined, and night
Approached. * * *

The heralds then pour'd water on their hands,
And the attendant youths, filling the cups,
Served them from left to right. Next all the tongues
They cast into the fire, and every guest
Arising, pour'd libation to the Gods.
Libation made, and all with wine sufficed,
Godlike Telemachus and Pallas both
Would have return'd incontinent on board,
But Nestor urged them still to be his guests.

THE ODYSSEY.

"Forbid it, Jove, and all the Powers of heaven!
That ye should leave me to repair on board
Your vessel, as I were some needy wretch
Cloakless and destitute of fleecy stores
Wherewith to spread the couch soft for myself,
Or for my guests. No. I have garments warm
An ample store, and rugs of richest dye;
And never shall Ulysses' son beloved,
My friend's own son, sleep on a galley's plank
While I draw vital air; grant also, Heaven,
That, dying, I may leave behind me sons
Glad to accommodate whatever guest!"

Him answer'd then Pallas cœrulean-eyed.
"Old Chief, thou hast well said, and reason bids
Telemachus thy kind commands obey.
Let him attend thee hence, that he may sleep
Beneath thy roof, but I return on board
Myself to instruct my people, and to give
All needful orders; for among them none
Is old as I, but they are youths alike,
Coevals of Telemachus, with whom
They have embark'd for friendship's sake alone.
I therefore will repose myself on board
This night, and to the Caucons bold in arms
Will sail to-morrow to demand arrears
Long time unpaid, and of no small amount.
But, since he has become thy guest, afford
My friend a chariot, and a son of thine
Who shall direct his way, nor let him want
Of all thy steeds the swiftest and the best."

So saying, the blue-eyed Goddess as upborne
On eagle's wings, vanish'd; amazement seized
The whole assembly, and the ancient King
O'erwhelm'd with wonder at that sight, the hand
Grasp'd of Telemachus, whom he thus bespake:

THE ODYSSEY.

"My friend! I prophesy that thou shalt prove
Nor base, nor dastard, whom, so young, the Gods
Already take in charge; for of the Powers
Inhabitants of Heaven, none else was this
Than Jove's own daughter Pallas, who among
The Grecians honor'd most thy generous Sire."

* * * *

So Nestor pray'd, whom Pallas gracious heard.
Then the Gerenian warrior old, before
His sons and sons-in-law, to his abode
Magnificent proceeded; they (arrived
Within the splendid palace of the King)
On thrones and couches sat in order ranged,
Whom Nestor welcomed, charging high the cup
With wine of richest sort, which she who kept
That treasure, now in the eleventh year
First broach'd, unsealing the delicious juice.
With this the hoary Senior fill'd a cup,
And to the daughter of Jove ægis-arm'd
Pouring libation, offer'd fervent prayer.

When all had made libation, and no wish
Remain'd of more, then each to rest retired,
And Nestor the Gerenian warrior old
Led thence Telemachus to a carved couch
Beneath the sounding portico prepared.

* * * *

But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Had tinged the East, arising from his bed,
Gerenian Nestor issued forth, and spake: * * *

"My sons, arise! lead forth the sprightly steeds,
And yoke them, that Telemachus may go."

So spake the Chief, to whose command his sons,
Obedient, yoked in haste the rapid steeds,
And the intendant matron of the stores
Disposed meantime within the chariot, bread

THE ODYSSEY.

And wine, with dainties, such as princes eat.
Telemachus into the chariot first
Ascended, and beside him, next, his place
Pisistratus the son of Nestor took,
Then seized the reins, and lash'd the coursers on.

BOOK IV



BOOK IV: PART I

THE STORY

AND when Telemachus and the son of Nestor stayed their chariot at the door, one spied them, and said to Menelaüs—

“Lo! here are two strangers who are like the children of kings. Shall we keep them here, or send them to another?”

But Menelaüs was wroth, and said, “Shall we, who have eaten so often of the bread of hospitality, send these strangers to another? Nay, but unyoke their horses and bid them sit down to meat.”

So the two lighted from the chariot, and after the bath they sat down to meat. And when they had ended the meal, Telemachus, looking round at the hall, said to his companion—

“See the gold and the amber, and the silver and the ivory. This is as the hall of Olympian Zeus.”

This he spake with his face close to his comrade’s ear, but Menelaüs heard him and said—

“With the halls of the gods nothing mortal may compare. And among men also there may be the match of these things. Yet I have wandered far, and got many possessions in many lands. But woe is me! while I gather these things my brother was foully slain in his house. Would that I had but the third part of this wealth of mine, so that they who perished at Troy were alive again. And most of all I mourn for the

THE ODYSSEY.

great Ulysses, for whether he be alive or dead no man knows."

But Telemachus wept to hear mention of his father, holding up his purple cloak before his eyes. This Menelaüs saw, and knew him who he was, and pondered whether he should wait till he should himself speak of his father, or should rather ask him of his errand. But while he pondered there came in the fair Helen, and three maidens with her, of whom one set a couch for her to sit, and one spread a carpet for her feet, and one bare a basket of purple wool, but she herself had a distaff of gold in her hand. And when she saw the strangers she said—

"Who are these, Menelaüs? Never have I seen such likeness in man or woman as this one bears to Ulysses. Surely 'tis his son Telemachus, whom he left an infant at home when ye went to Troy for my sake!"

Then said Menelaüs, "It must indeed be so, lady. For these are the hands and feet of Ulysses, and the look of his eyes and his hair. And but now, when I made mention of his name, he wept."

Then said Pisistratus, "King Menelaüs, thou speakest truth. This is indeed the son of Ulysses, who is come to thee, if haply thou canst help him by word or deed."

And Menelaüs answered, "Then is he the son of a man whom I loved right well. I thought to give him a city in this land, bringing him from Ithaca with all his goods. Then might we often have companied together, nor should aught have divided us but death itself. But these things the gods have ordered otherwise."

At these words they all wept—the fair Helen and Telemachus and Menelaüs; nor could Pisistratus refrain himself, for he thought of his dear brother Antilochus, whom Memnon, son of the Morning, slew at Troy. But the fair Helen put a mighty medicine in the wine

THE ODYSSEY.

whereof they drank—nepenthé men call it. So mighty is it that whosoever drinks of it, that day he weeps not, though father and mother die, and though men slay brother or son before his eyes. Polydamna, wife of King Thoas, had given it to her in Egypt, where indeed many medicines grow that are mighty both for good and ill.

And after this she said, "It were long to tell all the wise and valiant deeds of Ulysses. One thing, however, ye shall hear, and it is this: while the Greeks were before Troy he came into the city, having disguised himself as a beggar-man, yea, and he had laid many blows upon himself, so that he seemed to have been shamefully entreated. I only knew him who he was, and questioned him, but he answered craftily. And afterwards, when I had bathed him and anointed him with oil, I swore that I would not tell the thing till he had gone back to the camp. So he slew many Trojans with the sword, and learnt many things. And while other women in Troy lamented, I was glad, for my heart was turned again to my home."

Then Menelaüs said, "Thou speakest truly, lady. Many men have I seen, and traveled over many lands, but never have I seen one who might be matched with Ulysses. Well do I remember how, when I and other chiefs of the Greeks sat in the horse of wood, thou didst come, Deiphobus following thee. Some god who loved the sons of Troy put the thing into my heart. Thrice didst thou walk round our hiding-place and call by name to each one of the chiefs, likening thy voice in marvelous fashion to the voice of his wife. Then would Diomed and I have either risen from our place or answered thee straightway. But Ulysses hindered us, so saving all the Greeks."

But Telemachus said, "Yet all these things have not kept him, but that he has perished."

THE ODYSSEY.

And now it was the hour of sleep. And the next day Menelaüs asked Telemachus of his business.

Then Telemachus said, "I have come, if haply thou canst tell me aught of my father. For certain suitors of my mother devour my goods, nor do I see any help. Tell me therefore true, sparing me not at all, but saying if thou knowest anything of thyself, or hast heard it from another."

And Menelaüs answered, "It angers me to hear of these cowards who would lie in a brave man's bed. So a hind lays its young in a lion's den, but when he comes he slays both her and them. So shall it be with these in the day when Ulysses shall come back. But as to what thou askest me, I will answer clearly and without turning aside. I was in Egypt, the gods hindering my voyage because I had not offered due sacrifice. Now there is an island, Pharos men call it, a day's journey from the shore for a swift ship with a fair wind blowing. And in this I tarried against my will, the wind being contrary, ay, and should have died, but that Idothea, daughter of old Proteus, had pity on me. For she found me sitting alone while my companions fished with hooks, for hunger pressed them sore. And she said, 'Art thou altogether a fool, stranger, and without spirit, that thou sittest thus helpless, and seekest no deliverance, while the hearts of thy companions faint within them?' And I said, 'I tarry here against my will, for some god hinders my voyage, and thou, if thou be of the immortals, canst tell me whom I have offended.' Then she made answer, 'There is an old man of the sea who knows all things: his name is Proteus, and he is my father. And if thou couldst lie in ambush and take him, he would tell thee how thou mayest return to thy home, ay, and tell thee all, be it good or evil, that has befallen thee there.' And when I would fain know how I might lie in ambush and take him, seeing that

THE ODYSSEY.

it was hard for a mortal to master a god, she said, 'At noonday he comes to sleep in his caves, and his herd of seals comes with him. Thou must take three of thy companions whom thou judgest to be bravest, and I will hide you. Now the old man counts the seals, and when he has told the number he lies down in the midst. Then take heart and rush upon him, thou and thy companions. Much will he try to escape, making himself into all kinds of moving things, and into water and into fire. But when he shall ask of thy errand, being such in shape as thou sawest him lie down, then may ye loose him, and he will tell thee what thou wouldst know.' The next day came Idothea, bringing with her the skins of four seals which she had newly slain. Holes she made in the sand of the sea, and bade us sit in them, putting upon us the skins. It would have been a dreadful ambush for us, so evil was the smell of the seals, but the goddess gave us ambrosia, that we might hold under our nostrils, and the sweet savor prevailed against the smell. And at noon the old man came and counted the seals, and lay down to sleep. Then we rushed upon him; and the old man made himself now a lion, and now a snake and a leopard and a boar, and after this water, and then a tree in leaf. But still we held him. And at the last he asked me what I would. So I told him. And he said that I must first return over the sea to Egypt, and make due offerings to the gods. And when he had said this, I asked him of the chiefs, my friends, whether they had come back safe from Troy. And he said, 'Two only of the chiefs have perished; but those that fell in battle thou knowest thyself. Ajax, son of Oileus, was shipwrecked, and yet might have lived, but he spake blasphemously, so that Poseidon smote the rock whereon he sat, and he drank the salt water and perished. And thy brother Agamemnon was slain at a feast by the false Ægisthus.' Then I said,

THE ODYSSEY.

'There is yet another of whom I would hear.' And he answered, 'I saw the son of Laertes weeping in the island of Calypso, who keeps him against his will, nor can he depart, having neither ship nor rowers.' And after this the old man departed, and I, when I had done that which was commanded, and had made a great tomb for Agamemnon, my brother, came back thither. And now I would that thou shouldest stay here awhile, and I will give thee horses and a chariot, and a cup from which thou mayest pour out wine to the gods."

Then Telemachus answered, "I thank thee for the horses, but we may not keep such beasts in Ithaca, for it is rocky, and fit only for pasturing of goats."

And Menelaüs said, smiling, "Thou speakest well and wisely; but at least I will give thee other things, many and seemly, instead of the horses."

Now it had been made known meanwhile to the suitors in Ithaca that Telemachus was gone upon this journey seeking his father, and the thing displeased them much. And after that they had held counsel about the matter, it seemed best that they should lay in ambush against him, which should slay him as he came back to his home. So Antinoüs took twenty men and departed, purposing to lie in wait in the strait between Ithaca and Samos.

BOOK IV: PART II

THE POEM

[Telemachus and His Companions, Made Welcome
at the Palace of King Menelaüs, Are Filled
With Wonder at Its Splendors.](—(WORS-
LEY.)

SO they to hollow Lacedæmon drave,
To house of Menelaüs well-renowned.
He, on that day, for son and daughter gave
A marriage-feast to all his clansmen round.

* * * *

They then the hot-breathed horses there untie.
Eftsoons they fasten each within the stall,
Mix in the mangers barley-meal and rye,
The chariot lean against the shining wall,
And bring the men in to the festival;
Who the divine house of the Zeus-born king
Gazed on with silent rapture, for that all
The high-roofed dome a gleamy flash did fling,
Like as of sun or moon, upon them entering.

With eyes entranced to the bath they go.
There the maids wash them and with oil besmear,
And costly fine apparel round them throw.
So to the son of Atreus; and one there
The lustral stream from golden pitcher fair,

THE ODYSSEY.

To cleanse their hands, in silver basin poured,
And the well-polished table set with care,
Whereon the staid house-dame, piling a hoard
Of dainties, grudgeless gave whatever decked the board.

Also the carver many a dish did heap
Of flesh, and beakers ranged of costliest mould,
Wherein the herald poured the wine-draught deep.
Then said the hero with the locks of gold:
"Fall on now, feast right merrily, uncontrolled;
Then will we ask your nation and your name.
No dark oblivion doth your sires enfold;
But from a line of sceptred kings ye came—
For well I ween to such no caitiff blood lays claim."

So spake he, and upheaves with both his hands
A fat beef-chine and for their use purveys,
Which on the board his own set portion stands;
Nor his guests longer from the banquet stays.
Soon as the feast their appetite allays,
Forthwith Telemachus his head doth bend
Towards Nestor's son, and thus in whisper says,
Fearing lest any ear his words attend:
"O son of Nestor, look, mine own beloved friend!

"Even through all the echoing dome behold
How wondrously the glint of brass both shine,
Silver, electron, ivory, and gold!
Such and so glorious to celestial eyen
Haply may gleam the Olympian halls divine
Of Zeus, heaven's king! For where may voice be
found
So eloquently wrought as to define
And shape these splendors in articulate sound?
Wonder lays hold upon me while I gaze around."

THE ODYSSEY.

[Menelaüs, Overhearing, Tells the Youths He
Has No Pleasure in His Riches, Because of
His Great Grief for His Comrades, and Most
of All, for Ulysses.](—(WORSLEY.)

Thus while Telemachus his friend bespake,
Him the brave hero of the golden hair
Watched as he whispered, and did answer make:
"No one, my sons, of mortal brood may dare
Himself with Zeus, the lord of all, compare.
Immortal is the house where he doth dwell,
Immortal treasures bloom about him there.
But may be false or true, I cannot tell,
That earthly prince my pomp can rival or excel.

"For truly, having suffered many things,
Hardly I came at last, in the eighth year,
Home with my ships from long, long wanderings.

* * * *

So through the land I rove with wandering feet,
And get me store of treasure. But ah! the while
The dark usurper of my brother's seat
Covertly killed him, through a false wife's guile.
Thus I in wealth rule here with little cause to smile.

"These things ye haply may have heard before
From your own fathers, whosoe'er they be,
Since evils neither few nor light I bore,
Who lost a house built well and pleasantly,
Teeming with treasures and all luxury.
Yet gladly would I in my place enjoy
Even but a third part of the wealth ye see,
So they were living whom the wars in Troy,
Far from this knightly land of Argos, did destroy.

"Here in these halls I sit and still bewail
The fallen, and one time my soul I steep

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THE ODYSSEY.

And like a God issuing, at the side
Sat of Telemachus, to whom he spake:

"Hero! Telemachus! what urgent cause
Hath hither led thee, to the land far-famed
Of Lacedæmon o'er the spacious Deep?
Public concern or private? Tell me true."

To whom Telemachus discreet replied:
"Atrides! Menelaüs! prince renown'd!
News seeking of my Sire, I have arrived.
My household is devour'd, my fruitful fields
Are desolated, and my palace fill'd
With enemies, who while they mutual wage
Proud competition for my mother's love,
My flocks continual slaughter, and my bees.
For this cause, at thy knees suppliant, I beg
That thou wouldst tell me his disastrous end,
If either thou beheld'st with thine own eyes
His death, or from some wanderer of the Greeks
Hast heard it; for no common woes, alas!
Was he ordain'd to share even from the womb.
Neither through pity or o'erstrain'd respect
Flatter me; but explicit all relate
Which thou hast witness'd. If my noble Sire
E'er gratified thee by performance just
Of word or deed at Ilium, where ye fell
So numerous slain in fight, oh recollect
Now his fidelity, and tell me true!"

Then Menelaüs, sighing deep, replied:
"Gods! their ambition is to reach the bed
Of a brave man, however base themselves.
But as it chanches, when the hart hath laid
Her fawns new-yea'n'd and sucklings yet, to rest
Within some dreadful lion's gloomy den,

THE ODYSSEY.

She roams the hills, and in the grassy vales
Feeds heedless, till the lion, to his lair
Return'd, destroys her and her little ones,
So them thy Sire shall terribly destroy.

* * * *

But thy enquiries neither indirect
Will I evade, nor give thee false reply,
But all that from the Ancient of the Deep
I have received will utter, hiding nought."

[Menelaüs Lays Ambush for the Sea-Wizard, Proteus.](—(WORSLEY.)

"Fain to come hither, me the gods did keep
In Egypt, wroth for hecatombs unpaid.
Off the mainland, amid the rolling deep,
Far as in one day is the distance made
By some sharp keel with happy breeze conveyed,
Lies island Pharos with her haven fair,
To mariners well known a timely aid;
Thither for watering they resort; and there
For twenty days the gods detained me in despair.

"For all that while the breathings of the sea
Stirred not, wherewith the wave-borne barks are led,
And food and strength had vanished, but that me
Some god befriended, hard with woe bested—
Eidothea, child of Proteus, whose heart bled
To see me; and she met me far away,
Pacing companionless in doubt and dread—
For they with fish-hooks wandering all the day
Sought food, while famine ate them to the bone away.

"Near me she stood and spake: 'O weak of sense,
Or reckless, or perchance indulging pain
For pastime, that thou find'st no issue hence,

THE ODYSSEY.

Wasting for ever all these hearts in vain!
So did she speak, and I to her again:
'Goddess, whoe'er thou art, I stay not here
For pastime; but may be the gods some stain
Find in me. Heavenly birth makes perfect seer;
Tell me what god withstands, and my return make
clear.'

"She answered: 'Truly will I show this thing.
Proteus, the old sea-seer, doth here frequent;
Of Egypt he, Poseidon's underling;
Who knows all secret things in ocean pent,
My sire reputed. If thou circumvent
Him guardless, thy return he can unfold,
Ay, and the good and ill make evident,
Wrought in thy halls, if thou wouldst have them told,
While all these weary seasons o'er thy griefs have
rolled.'

"Then said I: 'Tell me how the god to snare,
Lest he first know me, and my toils evade.
Hardly can man celestial strength impair.'
She answered: 'Not for this be thou dismayed!
What time the sun in middle heaven is stayed,
Veiled in dark ripple, Zephyr's air beneath,
Comes up the god to sleep in cavern-shade.
Around him the whole sea-brood slumbereth;
All by the deep respire their bitter briny breath.

"There will I take you when the Dawn appears,
And set you couched in order. Choose thou well
Three comrades, bravest of thy mariners.
I all the old man's sleights to thee will tell.
He first the number of the seals will spell,
And then lie down, like shepherd with his sheep.
Soon as ye see him couched, remember well

THE ODYSSEY.

Your virtue, and in iron grasp him keep
Reluctant, though to all things that on earth's breast
creep

"He change, and water, and portentous fire,
You all the while clasp harder, strain the more.
When he your purpose shall with words inquire,
In the same figure that he whilome wore,
Loose him, and ask what god with anguish sore
Loads thee, and how the wide fish-teeming sea
Thou mayst pass over to thy native shore.'
This spoken, underneath the waves went she,
I to the stranded barks paced musing heavily.

"So to my ship returning and the deep,
I found my comrades. When the meal was o'er
And night descended with ambrosial sleep,
Tired we lay down on the surf-beaten shore
Till rosy-fingered Dawn did light restore.
Then by the margin of the highway flood
I moved, and dearly did the gods implore;
Also went with me three companions good,
Who first in each emprise for trustiest valor stood.

"Meanwhile Eidothea in the sea's deep breast
Dived, and brought up four seal-skins newly flayed,
Scheming with fraud her father to invest.
Forthwith for each a sand-scooped lair she made,
And sat there waiting. We no more delayed,
But all together hastened and came near.
Us then she ranged, each in wet hide arrayed.
Dire was the ambush, and the stench severe.
Who could a rank sea-beast at such close quarters bear?

"But she, delivering us, a great help planned,
And placed ambrosia near the lips of each,

THE ODYSSEY.

Which in our nostrils breathed an odor bland,
And the sea-monsters' stench did overreach.
There moveless through the morn and void of speech
We crouched, until the seals came from the sea,
Which then lay down in order on the beach.
Last the old sea-god—at high noon came he,
Found the fat seals, and all counted right carefully.

"Us with the first he counted, nor at all
Dreamed guile; then lay down on the sands to rest.
So we with shouts rush forth, and on him fall;
Nor he the sundry sleights within his breast
Failed to remember, and each art to test.
Lion long-maned, snake, panther, he became;
Then water, and a tree with leafy crest.
But we with clench of iron held our game,
Till the old sea-god tired and took his former frame.

[Proteus Directs Menelaüs, and Tells the Fate of
His Friends.]—(COWPER.)

The Ancient of the Deep, skill'd as he is
In wiles, yet weary, question'd me, and said:
"Oh Atreus' son, by what confederate God
Instructed liest thou in wait for me,
To seize and hold me? What is thy desire?"

So he; to whom thus answer I return'd:
"Old Seer! thou know'st; why, fraudulent, shouldst thou
ask?

It is because I have been prison'd long
Within this isle, whence I have sought in vain
Deliverance, till my wonted courage fails.
Yet say (for the Immortals all things know,)
What God detains me, and my course forbids
Hence to my country o'er the fishy deep?"

THE ODYSSEY.

So I; when thus the old one of the waves:
"But thy plain duty was to have adored
Jove, first, in sacrifice, and all the Gods,
That then embarking, by propitious gales
Impell'd, thou might'st have reach'd thy country soon.
For thou art doom'd ne'er to behold again
Thy friends, thy palace, or thy native shores,
Till thou have seen once more the hallow'd flood
Of Egypt, and with hecatombs adored
Devout the deathless tenants of the skies,
Then will they speed thee whither thou desirest."

He ended, and my heart broke at his words,
Which bade me pass again the gloomy gulf
To Egypt; tedious course, and hard to achieve!
Yet, though in sorrow whelm'd, I thus replied:

"Old prophet! I will all thy will perform.
But tell me, and the truth simply reveal;
Have the Achaians with their ships arrived
All safe, whom Nestor left and I, at Troy?
Or of the chiefs have any in their barks,
Or in their followers' arms found a dire death
Unlook'd for, since that city's siege we closed?"

I spake, when answer thus the God return'd:
"Atrides, why these questions? Need is none
That thou should'st all my secrets learn, which once
Reveal'd, thou wouldst not long dry-eyed remain.
Of those no few have died, and many live;
But leaders, two alone, in their return
Have died, (thou also hast had war to wage,,
And one, still living, roams the boundless sea."

THE ODYSSEY.

[How Ajax, Having Defied the Gods, Is Smitten
by Neptune.]—(COWPER.)

"Ajax, surrounded by his galleys, died.
Him Neptune, first, against the bulky rocks
The Gyræ drove, but saved him from the Deep;
Nor had he perish'd, hated as he was
By Pallas, but for his own impious boast
In frenzy utter'd, that he would escape
The billows, even in the Gods' despite.
Neptune that speech vain-glorious hearing, grasp'd
His trident, and the huge Gyræan rock
Smiting indignant, dash'd it half away;
Part stood, and part, on which the boaster sat
When first the brainsick fury seized him, fell,
Bearing him with it down into the gulfs
Of Ocean, where he drank the brine, and died."

[How Agamemnon, Returning Home, Is Treacher-
ously Slain by Ægisthus.]—(BRYANT.)

"Thy brother in his roomy ships escaped
The danger, for imperial Juno's aid
Preserved him. But when near Meleia's heights
About to land, a tempest seized and swept
The hero thence across the fishy deep,
Lamenting his hard lot, to that far cape
Where once abode Thyestes, and where now
His son Ægisthus dwelt. But when the gods
Sent other winds, and safe at last appeared
The voyage, they returned, and reached their home.
With joy he stepped upon his native soil,
And kissed the earth that bore him, while his tears
At that most welcome sight flowed fast and warm.
Him from a lofty perch a spy beheld,
Whom treacherous Ægisthus planted there,

THE ODYSSEY.

Bribed by two golden talents. He had watched
The whole year through, lest, coming unobserved,
The king might make his prowess felt. The spy
Flew to the royal palace with the news,
And instantly Ægisthus planned a snare.
He chose among the people twenty men,
The bravest, whom he stationed out of sight,
And gave command that others should prepare
A banquet. Then with chariots and with steeds,
And with a deadly purpose in his heart,
He went, and, meeting Agamemnon, bade
The shepherd of the people to the feast,
And slew him at the board as men might slay
A bullock at the crib. Of all who went
With Agamemnon thither, none survived,
And of the followers of Ægisthus none,
But all were slaughtered in the banquet-hall.

"He spake; my heart was breaking, and I wept,
While sitting on the sand, nor in my heart
Cared I to live, or longer to behold
The sweet light of the sun."

[How Ulysses, Bereft of Ships and Men, Is Im-
prisoned on a Distant Isle.](BRYANT.)

* * * "But when my heart
Was somewhat comforted; my spirit rose,
And thus I answered him with wingèd words:
"These men I know; name now the third, who still
Is kept from his return afar within
The mighty main—alive, perchance, or dead;
For, though I dread to hear, I long to know."
"I spake, and Proteus answered me again:
'It is Laertes' son, whose dwelling stands
In Ithaca. I saw him in an isle,
And in the cavern-palace of the nymph

THE ODYSSEY.

Calypso, weeping bitterly, for she
Constrains his stay. He cannot leave the isle
For his own country; ship arrayed with oars
And seamen has he none to bear him o'er
The breast of the great ocean."

[Proteus Foretells Immortality for Menelaüs,
Who, After Due Sacrifice in Egypt, Reaches
Argos in Safety.](—COWPER.)

"'But, Menelaüs, dear to Jove, thy fate
Ordains not thee the stroke of death to meet
In steed-famed Argos, but far hence the Gods
Will send thee to Elysium, and the earth's
Extremest bounds; (there Rhadamanthus dwells,
The golden-hair'd, and there the human kind
Enjoy the easiest life; no snow is there,
No biting winter, and no drenching shower,
But zephyr always gently from the sea
Breathes on them, to refresh the happy race;)
For that fair Helen is by nuptial bands
Thy own, and thou art son-in-law of Jove.'

"So saying, he plunged into the billowy waste.
I then, with my brave comrades to the fleet
Return'd, deep-musing as I went, and sad.
No sooner had I reach'd my ship beside
The ocean, and we all had supped, than night
From heaven fell on us, and at ease reposed
Along the margin of the sea, we slept.
But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Look'd rosy forth, drawing our galleys down
Into the sacred Deep, we rear'd again
The mast, unfurl'd the sail, and to our seats
On board returning, thresh'd the foamy flood.
Once more, at length, within the hallow'd stream

THE ODYSSEY.

Of Egypt mooring, on the shore I slew
Whole hecatombs, and (the displeasure thus
Of the Immortal Gods appeased,) I rear'd
To Agamemnon's never-dying fame
A tomb, and finishing it sail'd again
With such a gale from heaven vouchsafed, as sent
My ships swift scudding to the shores of Greece."

[The Suitors Learn With Astonishment and Rage
of Telemachus' Secret Departure.](—(WORS-
LEY.)

So they the morning with sweet converse wore.
The suitors all these hours in pastime spent,
And spear and whistling discus, as of yore,
Hurled on that well-smoothed ground without a dent,
Known long for outrage and unjust event.
Antinoüs sat there and Eurymachus,
Chief of the train, in arms most excellent;
To whom Noëmon, child of Phronius,
Came near, and to Antinoüs spake, inquiring thus:

"Know ye or not, Antinoüs, when shall wend
Telemachus from sandy Pylos? He
Sailed in my ship. Now must I needs descend
Therein to wide-wayed Elis, which for me
Feeds twelve brood-mares, and eke twelve foals there
be,
Unbroken mules; one would I break." But they
Stared, never dreaming such event to see.
Either, they thought, he tarrieth day by day
Here with his flocks, or in the swineherd's house doth
stay.

Him then Antinoüs answered: "Tell me true.
When did he hence depart, and with what train?

THE ODYSSEY.

Ithaca's choice ones, or were serfs his crew?
Or sailed he with his slaves across the main?
Not even that would he attempt in vain.
And did he force thee, or entreating sue?"
To him the son of Phronius spake again:
"Freely I gave. What else could a man do,
Pressed by such friend, weighed down with cares not
light nor few?

"And, next to us, the choicest of the land
Went with him, brave young men, large-hearted, tall.
Chiefest I viewed embarking from our strand
Mentor, or even a god; yet seemed he all
Like Mentor. Wonder on my soul doth fall.
For mine own eyes beheld but yesternorn
The noble Mentor in our capital,
Who then on shipboard was to Pylos borne."
So to his father's house. But wonder, rage and scorn
The manly spirit of those twain did take.

[They Plot an Ambush to Murder Telemachus on
His Homeward Voyage.](—(WORSLEY.)

Bidding the suitors pause amid their play,
Antinoüs in mid session thus outspake,
While through his eyes the inward wrath made way
So that they flamed like fire: "Ye gods, this day
Telemachus hath wrought a work of might,
Which late we boasted he should ne'er essay.
Yes, he hath launched a black ship in despite
Even of us, so many, and is gone outright.

"And, after us, the choicest of the land
Went with him; thus our wrongs are but begun.
Great Zeus, unnerving his vile heart and hand,

THE ODYSSEY.

Grind out his life, ere that revenge be won
Which he far off deviseth to have done!
Let me take ship with twenty men, and wait
In secret ambush which he cannot shun,
"Twixt Ithaca and Samos in the strait—
That he this bootless toil mourn miserably too late."

* * * *

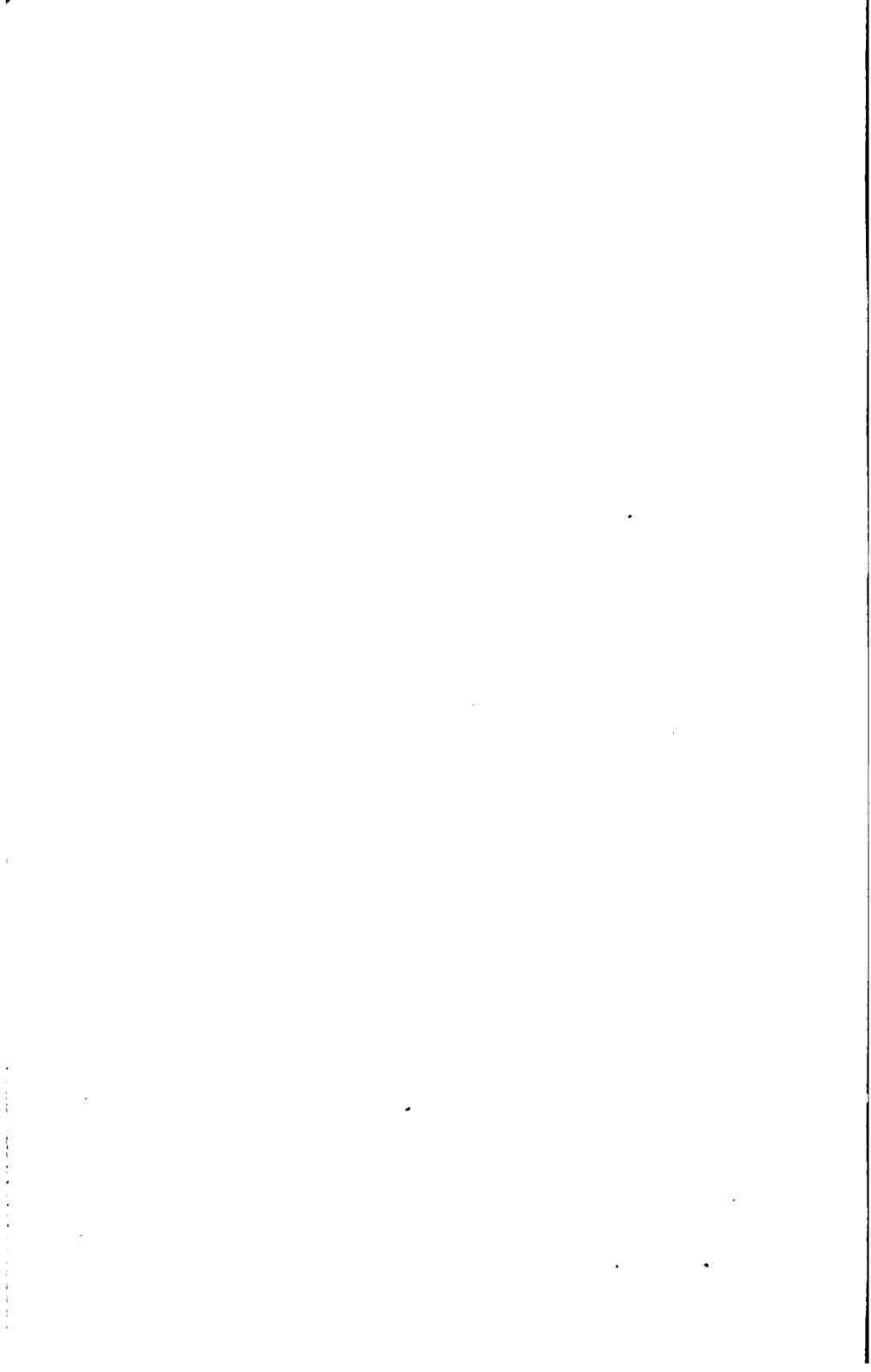
Then choosing twenty of their best he passed,
Girt with his trusty followers, to the shore;
Forthwith the ship they launch and plant the mast,
Set the white canvas and adjust each oar
Fast in the loops of leather, and all store
Of tackling and provision for their need
The servants bring. Far in the deep they moor
The good black ship, and straight embark with speed,
And take their evening meal, and watch till day recede.

But in the upper chamber lay the queen
Fasting for grief, not tasting drink nor meat,
Now dreaming his dark fall through doom unseen,
Now that her child their ambush would defeat.
Like as a lion, when the hunters meet
Around him, stares aghast with doubt and dread,
So lay the queen perplexed, till slumbers sweet
Through her worn soul a painless calm had shed,
And her o'er-wearied limbs sank loosening on the bed.

* * * *

Meanwhile the suitors on their watery way
Passed sailing, and were scheming in their breast
Hands of swift murder on the prince to lay.—
Rock-hung, in the dividing deep doth rest,
Midway between rough Same's towering crest
And Ithaca, the island Asteris,
Not large, yet hath it haven of the best
And on both sides approachable. In this
Lurked the Achaian band, nor feared their prey to miss.

BOOK V



BOOK V: PART I

THE STORY

WHILE Telemachus was yet sojourning in Sparta, Zeus sent Hermes to Calypso, to bid her that she should let Ulysses go. So Hermes donned his golden sandals, and took his wand in his hand, and came to the island of Ogygia, and to the cave where Calypso dwelt. A fair place it was. In the cave was burning a fire of sweet-smelling wood, and Calypso sat at her loom and sang with a lovely voice. And round about the cave was a grove of alders and poplars and cypresses, wherein many birds, falcons and owls and sea-crows were wont to roost; and all about the mouth of the cave was a vine with purple clusters of grapes; and there were four fountains which streamed four ways through meadows of parsley and violet. But Ulysses was not there, for he sat, as was his wont, on the sea-shore, weeping and groaning because he might not see wife and home and country.

And Calypso spied Hermes, and bade him come within, and gave him meat and drink, ambrosia and nectar, which are the food of the gods. And when he had ended his meal, she asked him of his errand. So he told her that he was come, at the bidding of Zeus, in the matter of Ulysses, for that it was the pleasure of the gods that he should return to his native country, and that she should not hinder him any more. It vexed Calypso much to hear this, for she would fain have kept Ulysses with her always, and she said—

THE ODYSSEY.

"Ye gods are always jealous when a goddess loves a mortal man. And as for Ulysses, did not I save him when Zeus had smitten his ship with a thunder-bolt, and all his comrades had perished? And now let him go—if it pleases Zeus. Only I cannot send him, for I have neither ship nor rowers. Yet will I willingly teach him how he may safely return."

And Hermes said, "Do this thing speedily, lest Zeus be wroth with thee."

So he departed. And Calypso went seeking Ulysses, and found him on the shore of the sea, looking out over the waters, as was his wont, and weeping, for he was weary of his life, so much did he desire to see Ithaca again. She stood by him and said—

"Weary not for thy native country, nor waste thyself with tears. If thou wilt go, I will speed thee on thy way. Take therefore thine axe and cut thee beams, and join them together, and make a deck upon them, and I will give thee bread and water and wine, and clothe thee also, so that thou mayest return safe to thy native country, for the gods will have it so."

"Nay," said Ulysses, "what is this that thou sayest? Shall I pass in a raft over the dreadful sea, over which even ships go not without harm. I will not go against thy will; but thou must swear the great oath of the gods that thou plannest no evil against me."

Then Calypso smiled and said, "These are strange words. By the Styx I swear that I plan no harm against thee, but only such good as I would ask myself, did I need it; for indeed my heart is not of iron, but rather full of compassion."

Then they two went to the cave and sat down to meat, and she set before him food such as mortal men eat, but she herself ate ambrosia and drank nectar, as the gods are wont. And afterwards she said—

"Why art thou so eager for thy home? Surely if

THE ODYSSEY.

thou knewest all the trouble that awaits thee, thou wouldst not go, but wouldst rather dwell with me. And though thou desirest all the day long to see thy wife, surely I am not less fair than she."

"Be not angry," Ulysses made reply. "The wise Penelopé cannot indeed be compared to thee, for she is a mortal woman and thou art a goddess. Yet is my home dear to me, and I would fain see it again."

The next day Calypso gave him an axe with a handle of olive wood, and an adze, and took him to the end of the island, where there were great trees, long ago sapless and dry, alder and poplar and pine. Of these he felled twenty, and lopped them, and worked them by the line. Then the goddess brought him a gimlet and he made holes in the logs and joined them with pegs. And he made decks and side-planking also; also a mast and a yard, and a rudder wherewith to turn the raft. And he fenced it about with a bulwark of osier against the waves. The sails, indeed, Calypso wove, and Ulysses fitted them with braces and halyards and sheets. And afterwards with ropes he moored the raft to the shore.

On the fourth day all was finished, and on the fifth day he departed. And Calypso gave him goodly garments and a skin of wine, and a skin of water, and rich provender in a wallet of leather. She sent also a fair wind blowing behind, and Ulysses set his sails and proceeded joyfully on his way; nor did he sleep, but watched the sun and the stars, still steering, as indeed Calypso had bidden, to the left. So he sailed for seventeen days, and on the eighteenth he saw the hills of Phæacia and the land, which had the shape of a shield.

But Poseidon spied him as he sailed, and was wroth to see him so near to the end of his troubles. Wherefore he sent all the winds of heaven down upon him.

THE ODYSSEY.

Sore troubled was Ulysses, and said to himself, "It was truth that Calypso spake when she said how that I should suffer many troubles returning to my home. Would that I had died that day when many a spear was cast by the men of Troy over the dead Achilles. Then would the Greeks have buried me; but now shall I perish miserably."

And as he spake a great wave struck the raft and tossed him far away, so that he dropped the rudder from his hand. Nor for a long time could he rise, so deep was he sunk, and so heavy was the goodly clothing which Calypso had given him. Yet at the last he rose, and spat the salt water out of his mouth, and, so brave was he, sprang at the raft and caught it and sat thereon, and was borne hither and thither by the waves. But Ino saw him and pitied him—a woman she had been, and was now a goddess of the sea—and came and sat upon the waves, saying—

"Luckless mortal, why doth Poseidon hate thee so? He shall not slay thee, though he fain would do it. Put off these garments and swim to the land of Phæacia, putting this veil under thy breast. And when thou art come to the land, loose it from thee, and cast it into the sea; but when thou castest it, look away."

But Ulysses doubted what this might be, and thought that he would yet stay on the raft while the timbers held together, for that the land was far away. But as he thought, yet another great wave struck it, and scattered the timbers. And he sat upon one of them, as a man sits upon a horse, and then he stripped off the garments which Calypso had given him, and so, leaping into the sea, made to swim to the land.

And Poseidon saw him, and said, "Get to the shore if thou canst, but even so thou art not come to the end of thy troubles."

So for two days and two nights he swam, Athéné

THE ODYSSEY.

helping him, for otherwise he had perished. But on the third day there was a calm, and he saw the land from the top of a great wave, for the waves were yet high, close at hand. Dear as a father to his son, rising up from grievous sickness, so dear was the land to Ulysses. But when he came near he heard the waves breaking along the shore, for there was no harbor there, but only cliffs and rugged rocks. And while he doubted what he should do, a great wave bore him to the shore. Then would he have perished, all his bones being broken; but Athené put it in his heart to lay hold of a great rock till the wave had spent itself. And even then had he died, for the ebb caught him and bore him far out to sea; but he bethought him that he would swim along, if haply he might see some landing-place. And at last he came to the mouth of a river, where there were no rocks. Then at last he won his way to the land. His knees were bent under him, and his hands dropped at his side, and the salt water ran out of his mouth and nostrils. Breathless was he and speechless; but when he came to himself, he loosed the veil from under his breast and cast it into the sea.

Then he lay down on the rushes by the bank of the river and kissed the earth, thinking within himself, "What now shall I do? for if I sleep here by the river, I fear that the dew and the frost may slay me; for indeed in the morning-time the wind from the river blows cold. And if I go up to the wood, to lay me down to sleep in the thicket, I fear that some evil beast may devour me."

But it seemed better to go to the wood. So he went. Now this was close to the river, and he found two bushes, of wild olive one, and of fruitful olive the other. So thickly grown together were they that the winds blew not through them. nor did the sun pierce them, nor yet the rain. Thereunder crept Ulysses,

THE ODYSSEY.

and found great store of leaves, shelter enough for two or three, even in a great storm. Then, even as a man who dwells apart from others, cherishes his fire, hiding it under the ashes, so Ulysses cherished his life under the leaves. And Athené sent down upon his eyelids deep sleep, that might ease him of his toil.

BOOK V: PART II

THE POEM

[Hermes is Sent by Jove to Bid Calypso Permit
Ulysses to Depart.].—(WORSLEY.)

HE nimbly underneath his feet made fast
Fair-shining sandals of ambrosial gold,
Wherewith the wide sea, with the blowing blast,
And land unmeasured he of old hath passed;
Then took the wand which can men's eyes subdue,
Whomso he listeth in long sleep to cast,
And sleeping wake to breathe and feel anew—
This holding in his hand the Slayer of Argus flew.

He on Pieria pitched, and in the sea
Shot from the ether. Him the waves upbore
Like to some bird that on the watch for prey
Searches the barren sea-gulfs o'er and o'er,
And dips her feathers in the ocean hoar.
So Hermes through the yielding waters drave
Till the nymph's island rose his eyes before.
Gladly he came forth from the dark-blue wave,
And through the land walked on, and came to a great
cave.

There dwelt the fair-haired nymph, and her he found
Within. Bright flames, that on the hearth did play,
Fragrance of burning cedar breathed around,

THE ODYSSEY.

And fume of incense wafted every way.
There her melodious voice the livelong day,
Timing the golden shuttle, rose and fell.
And round the cave a leafy wood there lay,
Where green trees waved o'er many a shady dell,
Alder and poplar black and cypress sweet of smell.

Thither the long-winged birds retired to sleep,
Falcon and owl and sea-crow loud of tongue,
Who plies her business in the watery deep;
And round the hollow cave her tendrils flung
A healthy vine, with purpling clusters hung;
And fountains four, in even order set,
Near one another, from the stone out-sprung,
Streaming four ways their crystal-showery jet
Through meads of parsley soft and breathing violet.

So that a god, if any came that way,
For wonder, admiration, and delight
Would stand agaze, as Hermes gazed that day;
Who, having satisfied his soul with sight,
Moved where the broad cave did his steps invite.
Nor did Calypso, nymph divine, I trow,
His features or his form not read aright.
For never do the gods—not even though
Asunder far they dwell—each other fail to know.

[Hermes Delivers Jove's Message.]—(BRYANT.)

* * * Ulysses, large of heart,
Was not within. Apart, upon the shore,
He sat and sorrowed, where he oft in tears
And sighs and vain repinings passed the hours,
Gazing with wet eyes on the barren deep.

* * *
The herald Hermes made his message known: * * *

THE ODYSSEY.

"I came unwillingly, at Jove's command;
For who of choice would traverse the wide waste
Of the salt ocean, with no city near
Where men adore the gods with solemn rites
And chosen hecatombs. No god has power
To elude or to resist the purposes
Of ægis-bearing Jove. With thee abides,
He bids me say, the most unhappy man
Of all who round the city of Priam waged
The battle through nine years, and, in the tenth,
Laying it waste, departed for their homes.
But in their voyage they provoked the wrath
Of Pallas, who called up the furious winds
And angry waves against them. By his side
Sank all his gallant comrades in the deep.
Him did the winds and waves drive hither. Him
Jove bids thee send away with speed; for here
He must not perish, far from all he loves.
So is it preordained that he behold
His friends again, and stand once more within
His high-roofed palace, on his native soil."
He spake; Calypso, glorious goddess, heard,
And shuddered, and with wingèd words replied:

[Calypso, Repining Bitterly at the Injustice of the
Gods, Obeys Jove's Mandate.](—(POPE.)

"Ungracious gods! with spite and envy cursed!
Still to your own ethereal race the worst!
Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
And love, the only sweet of life, destroy.
Did ever goddess by her charms engage
A favor'd mortal, and not feel your rage? * * *
A man, an outcast to the storm and wave,
It was my crime to pity, and to save;
When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,

THE ODYSSEY.

And sunk his brave companions in the main,
Alone, abandon'd, in mid-ocean toss'd,
The sport of winds, and driven from every coast,
Hither this man of miseries I led,
Received the friendless, and the hungry fed;
Nay promised (vainly promised) to bestow
Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
'Tis past—and Jove decrees he shall remove;
Gods as we are, we are but slaves to Jove.
Go then he may (he must, if he ordain,
Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again);
But never, never shall Calypso send
To toils like these her husband and her friend.
What ships have I, what sailors to convey,
What oars to cut the long laborious way?
Yet I'll direct the safest means to go:
That last advice is all I can bestow." * * *

The nymph, obedient to divine command,
To seek Ulysses, paced along the sand.
Him pensive on the lonely beach she found,
With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
And inly pining for his native shore. * * *
There sate all desolate, and sighed alone,
With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan.
And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
Till, dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.
Here, on his musing mood the goddess press'd,
Approaching soft, and thus the chief address'd:

[Ulysses, Aided by the Nymph, Builds a Galley
and Sets Sail.]—(WORSLEY.)

"Weep no more, luckless hero, weep no more,
Nor always thus consume thy life with pain.
Now will I send thee from this island-shore

THE ODYSSEY.

Back to thy country o'er the watery plain.
Come thou and fall unto thy task amain.
Fell trees; with iron a broad craft prepare,
Made strongly to withstand the billows' strain,
And fix thwart timbers for the deck with care,
Which o'er the cloud-dark billows may thee safely bear.

"I corn and water and red wine will place
Therein, good store, thy famine pangs to quell,
And eke thy form with brave apparel grace,
And with fair breezes waft thee onward well,
Which to thy fatherland shall safe impel
The good bark scatheless, if the gods assent,
Who in the wide-realmed heaven securely dwell;
For it is theirs to judge of each event,
Their strength is more than mine to forward or prevent."

* * * *

She then an axe of huge dimensions gave,
On both sides bladed, steel of temper fine,
Into the strong clasp of Odysseus brave,
Beautiful, helved with olive, work divine,
And well-curved hatchet, whose metallic shine
Lightened afar. Anon the way she led
To the isle's margin, where the soaring pine,
Alder, and poplar black, were thickly spread,
Fitted to float with ease—sapless long since and dead.

So having shown him where the wood grew tall,
Calypso, nymph divine, returning went
Homeward. But he the forest-trees made fall,
Eager to reap his work's accomplishment.
Nor did his vigor from the task relent
Till twenty he had felled, and each with care
Meted and planed. Then nymph Calypso lent

THE ODYSSEY.

Augers, and he the pierced planks fitted fair,
And with firm bolts and joints the good ship did prepare.

As is the wide-walled compass which a man
Makes for a merchant-craft which he doth build,
Such for his broad bark did Odysseus plan,
And set the upright ribs, and sockets drilled
For thwart deck-timbers, and the space unfilled
With horizontal planks did overlay,
And planted the tall mast with art well skilled,
And to its place the sail-yard did convey,
And shaped the rudder well to rule her onward way.

Also an osier bulwark woven deep
To breast the dashings of the angry tide,
That he securely through the waves might sweep,
He wrought; and ballast for the ship supplied.
Divine Calypso linen did provide
For sails, which he contriving not in vain
Well fashioned, and each rope and cable tied,
Bound down the strong sheets, fit for every strain,
And launched the ship with levers on the noble main.

'Twas the fourth day, and all his task was o'er.
Him on the fifth Calypso, nymph divine,
Robed in sweet raiment, culled from her own store,
And bathed, and to his good bark did consign.
Two skins, one filled with water, one with wine,
She gave him, and a wallet stored with meat,
And in his wake along the rippling brine
Breathed a warm wind, exceeding soft and sweet,
Which with spread sails Odysseus did right gladly
greet.

THE ODYSSEY.

[Neptune, Seeing Ulysses About to Escape His Power, Is Enraged.](—(COWPER.)

Beside the helm he sat, steering expert,
Nor sleep fell ever on his eyes that watch'd
Intent the Pleiads, tardy in decline
Bootes, and the Bear, call'd else the Wain,
Which, in his polar prison circling, looks
Direct toward Orion, and alone
Of these sinks never to the briny Deep.
That star the lovely Goddess bade him hold
Continual on his left through all his course.
Ten days and seven, he, navigating, cleaved
The brine, and on the eighteenth day, at length,
The shadowy mountains of Phæacia's land
Descried, where nearest to his course it lay
Like a broad buckler on the waves afloat.

But Neptune, now returning from the land
Of Ethiopia, mark'd him on his raft
Skimming the billows, from the mountain tops
Of distant Solyma. With tenfold wrath
Inflamed that sight he view'd, his brows he shook,
And thus within himself, indignant, spake:

"So, then, new counsels in the skies, it seems,
Propitious to Ulysses, have prevailed
Since Ethiopia hath been my abode.
He sees Phæacia nigh, where he must leap
The boundary of his woes; but ere that hour
Arrive, I will ensure him many a groan."

[Neptune Summons the Winds, and Overwhelms
Ulysses With a Great Tempest.](—(CHAP-
MAN.)

* * * He gather'd clouds from land,
Frighted the seas up, snatch'd into his hand

THE ODYSSEY.

His horrid trident, and aloft did toss,
Of all the winds, all storms he could engross,
All earth took into sea with clouds, grim Night
Fell tumbling headlong from the cope of light,
The East and South winds jostled in the air,
The violent Zephyr, and North making-fair,
Roll'd up the waves before them. And then bent
Ulysses' knees, then all his spirit was spent.
* * * A huge wave took him by the head,
And hurl'd him o'er board; ship and all it laid
Inverted quite amidst the waves, but he
Far off from her sprawl'd strow'd about the sea,
His stern still holding broken off, his mast
Burst in the midst, so horrible a blast
Of mix'd winds struck it. Sails and sail-yards fell
Amongst the billows; and himself did dwell
A long time under water, nor could get
In haste his head out, wave with wave so met
In his depression; and his garments too,
Giv'n by Calypso, gave him much to do,
Hind'ring his swimming; yet he left not so
His drenchéd vessel, for the overthrow
Of her nor him, but gat at length again,
Wrastling with Neptune, hold of her; and then
Sat in her bulk, insulting over death,
Which, with the salt stream prest to stop his breath,
He scap'd, and gave the sea again to give
To other men. His ship so striv'd to live,
Floating at random, cuff'd from wave to wave.
As you have seen the North wind when he drave
In autumn heaps of thorn-fed grasshoppers
Hither and thither, one heap this way bears,
Another that, and makes them often meet
In his confus'd gales; so Ulysses' fleet
The winds hurl'd up and down.

THE ODYSSEY.

[His Ship Destroyed, Ulysses is Buffeted by the Waves and Cast Upon the Shore.]—(POPE.)

While thus his thoughts an anxious council hold,
The raging god a watery mountain roll'd;
Like a black sheet the whelming billows spread,
Burst o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.
Planks, beams, disparted fly; the scatter'd wood
Rolls diverse, and in fragments strews the flood.
So the rude Boreas, o'er the field new-shorn,
Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.
And now a single beam the chief bestrides,
There poised a while above the bounding tides,
Then prone on ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas along.
All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
Stern Neptune eyed him, and contemptuous said:
"Go, learn'd in woes, and other foes essay!
Go, wander helpless on the watery way:
Thus, thus find out the destined shore, and then
(If Jove ordains it) mix with happier men.
Whate'er thy fate, the ills our wrath could raise
Shall last remember'd in thy best of days."

* * *

Amidst the rocks he heard a hollow roar
Of murmuring surges breaking on the shore:
Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
To shield the vessel from the rolling sea,
But cliffs, and shaggy shores, a dreadful sight!
All rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.

* * *

A monstrous wave upbore
The chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore:
Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,
But instant Pallas enter'd in his soul.
Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,

THE ODYSSEY.

And stuck adherent, and suspended hung;
Till the huge surge roll'd off; then backward sweep
The reflux tides, and plunge him in the deep.
As when the polypus, from forth his cave
Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave,
His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands:
So the rough rock had shagg'd Ulysses' hands
And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
The unhappy man; e'en fate had been in vain;
But all-subduing Pallas lent her power,
And prudence saved him in the needful hour.
Beyond the beating surge his course he bore
(A wider circle, but in sight of shore),
With longing eyes, observing, to survey
Some smooth ascent, or safe sequester'd bay.
Between the parting rocks at length he spied
A falling stream with gentler waters glide;
Where to the seas the shelving shore declined,
And form'd a bay impervious to the wind.

* * * *

He pray'd, and straight the gentle stream subsides,
Detains the rushing current of his tides,
Before the wanderer smooths the watery way,
And soft receives him from the rolling sea.
That moment, fainting as he touch'd the shore,
He dropp'd his sinewy arms; his knees no more
Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
His swoln heart heaved; his bloated body swell'd:
From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran;
And lost in lassitude lay all the man,
Deprived of voice, of motion, and of breath;
The soul scarce waking in the arms of death.

THE ODYSSEY.

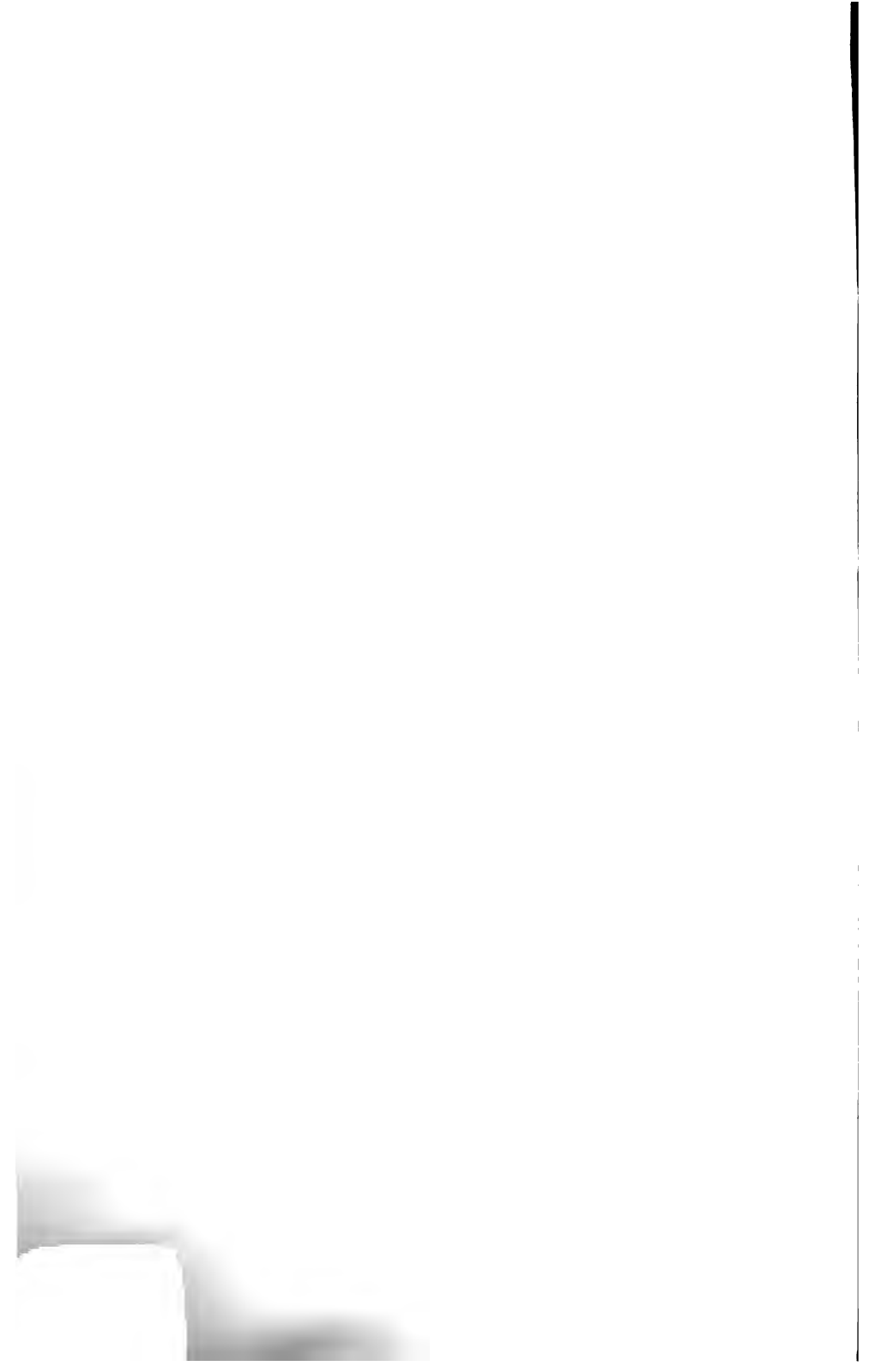
[Naked and Spent With Toil, Ulysses Makes Him
a Shelter of Leaves, and Falls Into Deep
Sleep.](—WORSLEY.)

But when his spirit had revived anew, * * *
He, turning, sank down on the welcome ground,
Couched in the rushes, and the boon earth's breast
Kissed, and in anguish deep his noble heart addressed:

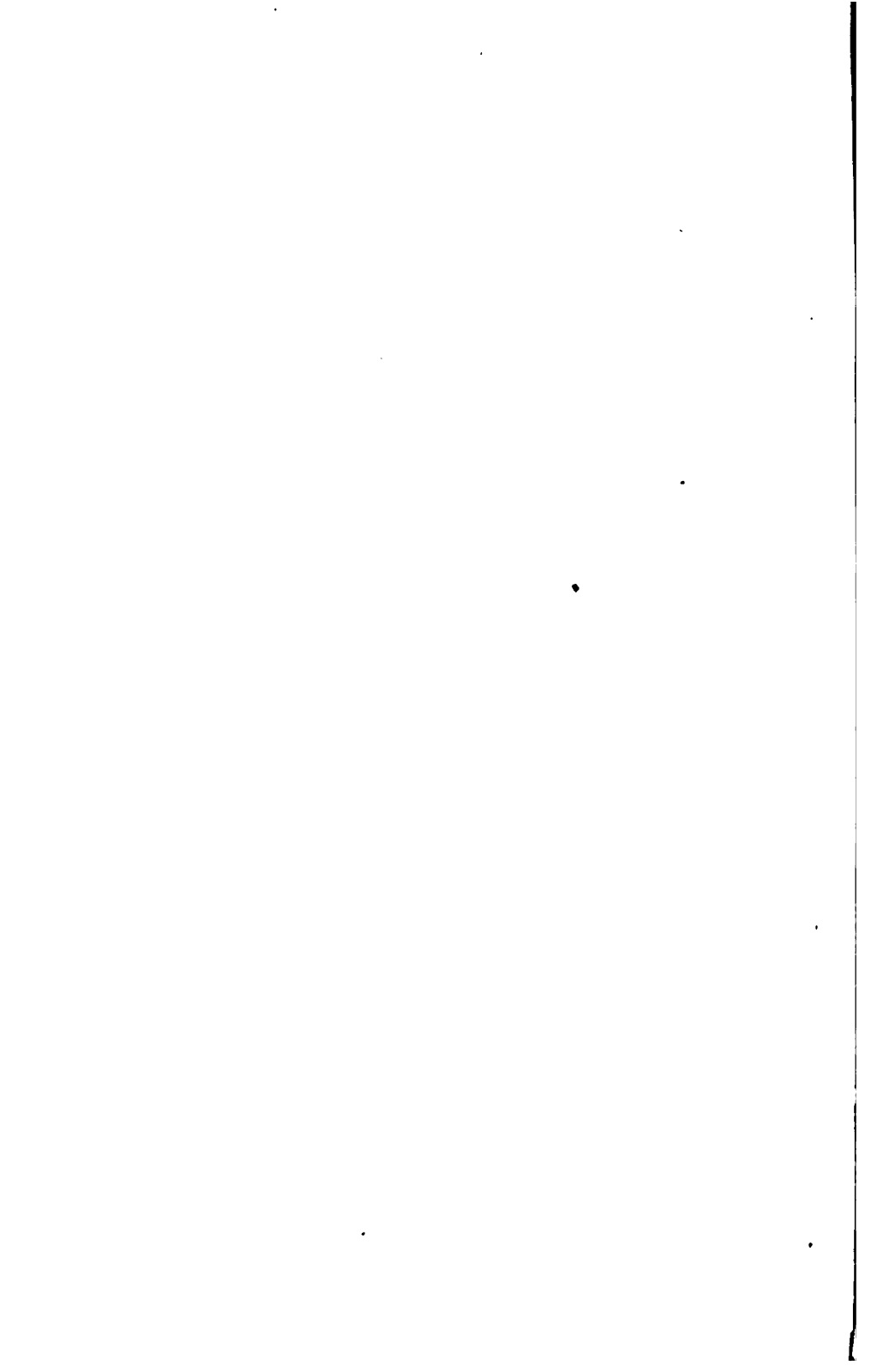
"Ay me! what evils must I yet go through?
How will they end? If here I pass the night,
I fear lest haply the life-showering dew,
Mixed with keen hoar-frost, overcome me quite,
Sadly forth-gasping my enfeebled sprite—
And before dawn the river-wind blows chill;
Or should the wooded slope soft rest invite,
And the dire shiverings of fatigue be still,
I shudder lest the maw of some wild beast I fill."

Thus while he pondered in his mind, this way
Seemed in the issue better fraught with gain.
He to the forest made ascent, which lay
A little from the water, beacon plain.
There from a single stem grew olives twain,
One fruitful and one wild, impleachèd deep,
Whose shade no moist wind pierced nor sun nor rain.
Under their branches did Odysseus creep,
And a broad couch of leaves with vehement hands did
heap.

For leaves enough to shelter two or three,
Even in severe mid-winter, there were found.
Such couch Odysseus was right glad to see,
And he, reclining, piled the leaves well round.
As some lone dweller on a distant ground
Hoards up the seed of fire in embers dead,
Wind-proof, Odysseus underneath the mound
Of leaves lay warm, and o'er his weary head
Athené all night long pain-healing slumber shed.



BOOK VI



BOOK VI: PART I

THE STORY

NOW the king of Phæacia was Alcinoüs, and he had five sons and one daughter, Nausicaä. To her, where she slept with her two maidens by her, Athené went, taking the shape of her friend, the daughter of Dymas, and said—

“Why hath thy mother so idle a daughter, Nausicaä? Lo! thy garments lie unwashed, and thy wedding must be near, seeing that many nobles in the land are suitors to thee. Ask then thy father that he give thee the wagon with the mules, for the laundries are far from the city, and I will go with thee.”

And when the morning was come, Nausicaä awoke, marvelling at the dream, and went seeking her parents. Her mother she found busy with her maidens at the loom, and her father she met as he was going to the council with the chiefs of the land. Then she said, “Give me, father, the wagon with the mules, that I may take the garments to the river to wash them. Thou shouldest always have clean robes when thou goest to the council; and there are my five brothers also, who love to have newly washed garments at the dance.”

But of her own marriage she said nothing. And her father, knowing her thoughts, said, “It is well. The men shall harness the wagon for thee.”

So they put the clothing into the wagon. And her mother put also food and wine, and olive oil also, wherewith she and her maidens might anoint themselves after the bath. So they climbed into the wagon

THE ODYSSEY.

and went to the river. And then they washed the clothing, and spread it out to dry on the rocks by the sea. And after that they had bathed and anointed themselves, they sat down to eat and drink by the river side; and after the meal they played at ball, singing as they played, and Nausicaä, fair as Artemis when she hunts on Taygetus or Erymanthus wild goats and stags, led the song. But when they had nearly ended their play, the princess, throwing the ball to one of her maidens, cast it so wide that it fell into the river. Whereupon they all cried aloud, and Ulysses awoke. And he said to himself, "What is this land to which I have come? Are they that dwell therein fierce or kind to strangers? Just now I seemed to hear the voice of nymphs, or am I near the dwellings of men?"

Then he twisted leaves about his loins, and rose up and went towards the maidens, who indeed were frightened to see him (for he was wild of aspect), and fled hither and thither. But Nausicaä stood and fled not. Then Ulysses thought within himself, should he go near and clasp her knees, or, lest haply this should anger her, should he stand and speak? And this he did, saying—

"I am thy suppliant, O queen. Whether thou art a goddess, I know not. But if thou art a mortal, happy thy father and mother, and happy thy brothers, and happiest of all he who shall win thee in marriage. Never have I seen man or woman so fair. Thou art like a young palm-tree that but lately I saw in Delos, springing by the temple of the god. But as for me, I have been cast on this shore, having come from the island Ogygia, Pity me, then, and lead me to the city, and give me something, a wrapper of this linen, maybe, to put about me. So may the gods give thee all blessings!"

And Nausicaä made answer, "Thou seemest, stranger.

THE ODYSSEY.

to be neither evil nor foolish; and as for thy plight, the gods give good fortune or bad, as they will. Thou shalt not lack clothing or food, or anything that a suppliant should have. And I will take thee to the city. Know also that this land is Phæacia, and that I am daughter to Alcinoüs, who is king thereof."

Then she called to her maidens, "What mean ye, to flee when ye see a man? No enemy comes hither to harm us, for we are dear to the gods, and also we live in an island of the sea, so that men may not approach to work us wrong; but if one cometh here overborne by trouble, it is well to succor him. Give this man, therefore, food and drink, and wash him in the river, where there is shelter from the wind."

So they brought him down to the river, and gave him a tunic and a cloak to clothe himself withal, and also oil-olive in a flask of gold. Then, at his bidding, they departed a little space, and he washed the salt from his skin and out of his hair, and anointed himself, and put on the clothing. And Athené made him taller and fairer to see, and caused the hair to be thick on his head, in color as a hyacinth. Then he sat down on the sea-shore, right beautiful to behold, and the maiden said—

"Not without some bidding of the gods comes this man to our land. Before, indeed, I deemed him uncommonly, but now he seems like to the gods. I should be well content to have such a man for a husband, and maybe he might will to abide in this land. But give him, ye maidens, food and drink."

So they gave him, and he ate ravenously, having fasted long. Then Nausicaä bade yoke the mules, and said to Ulysses—

"Follow thou with the maidens, and I will lead the way in the wagon. For I would not that the people should speak lightly of me. And I doubt not that

THE ODYSSEY.

were thou with me some one of the baser sort would say, 'Who is this stranger, tall and fair, that cometh with Nausicaä? Will he be her husband? Perchance it is some god who has come down at her prayer, or a man from far away; for of us men of Phæacia she thinks scorn.' It would be shame that such words should be spoken. And indeed it is ill-done of a maiden who, father and mother unknowing, companies with men. Do thou, then, follow behind, and when we are come to the city, tarry in a poplar grove that thou shalt see ('tis the grove of Athené) till I shall have come to my father's house. Then follow; and for the house, that any one, even a child, can show thee, for the other Phæacians dwell not in such. And when thou art come within the doors, pass quickly through the hall to where my mother sits. Close to the hearth is her seat, and my father's hard by, where he sits with the wine cup in his hand, as a god. Pass him by and lay hold of her knees, and pray her that she give thee safe return to thy country."

It was evening when they came to the city. And Nausicaä drove the wagon to the palace. Then her brothers came out to her, and loosed the mules and carried in the clothing. Then she went to her chamber, where Eurymedusa, who was her nurse, lighted a fire, and prepared a meal. Meanwhile Ulysses came from the grove, and lest any one should see him, Athené spread a mist about him, and when he had now reached the city, she took the shape of a young maiden carrying a pitcher, and met him.

Then Ulysses asked her, "My child, canst thou tell me where dwells Alcinoüs? for I am a stranger in this place."

And she answered, "I will show thee, for indeed he dwells nigh to my own father. But be thou silent, for we Phæacians love not strangers over much."

Nausicaa (Greek Girls Playing Ball)



2017

BOOK VI: PART II

THE POEM

[Pallas, Devising Succor for Ulysses, Inspires the
Princess Nausicaä and Her Damsels to Repair
to the River.](BRYANT.)

THUS overcame with toil and weariness,
The noble sufferer Ulysses slept,
While Pallas hastened to the realm and town
Peopled by the Phæacians, where Alcinoüs reigned.
Now to his palace, planning the return
Of the magnanimous Ulysses, came
The blue-eyed goddess Pallas, entering
The gorgeous chamber where a damsel slept,
Nausicaä, daughter of the large-souled king
Alcinoüs, beautiful in form and face
As one of the immortals. * * *

Soon the bright morning came * * * and then
Appeared the maiden, bringing from her bower
The shining garments. In the polished car
She piled them, while with many pleasant meats
And flavoring morsels for the day's repast
Her mother filled a hamper, and poured wine
Into a goatskin. As her daughter climbed
The car, she gave into her hands a cruse
Of gold with smooth anointing oil for her
And her attendant maids. Nausicaä took
The scourge and showy reins, and struck the mules

THE ODYSSEY.

To urge them onward. Onward with loud noise
They went, and with a speed that slackened not,
And bore the robes and her—yet not alone,
For with her went the maidens of her train.
Now when they reached the river's pleasant brink,
Where lavers had been hollowed out to last
Perpetually, and freely through them flowed
Pure water that might cleanse the foulest stains,
They loosed the mules, and drove them from the wain
To browse the sweet grass by the eddying stream;
And took the garments out, and flung them down
In the dark water, and with hasty feet
Trampled them there in frolic rivalry.
And when the task was done, and all the stains
Were cleansed away, they spread the garments out
Along the beach and where the stream had washed
The gravel cleanest. Then they bathed, and gave
Their limbs the delicate oil, and took their meal
Upon the river's border—while the robes
Beneath the sun's warm rays were growing dry.
And now, when they were all refreshed by food,
Mistress and maidens laid their veils aside
And played at ball. Nausicaä the white-armed
Began a song.

[Ulysses, Wakened by the Maidens' Sport, Comes
Forth and Supplicates Nausicäa for Aid.]—
(POPE.)

Meantime (the care and favorite of the skies)
Wrapp'd in imbowering shade, Ulysses lies,
His woes forgot! but Pallas now address'd
To break the bands of all-composing rest.
Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaä threw
The various ball; the ball erroneous flew,
And swam the stream; loud shrieks the virgin train,

THE ODYSSEY.

And the loud shriek redoubles from the main.
Waked by the shrilling sound, Ulysses rose,
And, to the deaf woods wailing, breathed his woes:

"Ah me! on what inhospitable coast,
On what new region is Ulysses toss'd;
Posses'd by wild barbarians, fierce in arms;
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
What sounds are these that gather from the shores?
The voice of nymphs that haunt the sylvan bowers,
The fair-hair'd Dryads of the shady wood;
Or azure daughters of the silver flood;
Or human voice? but issuing from the shades,
Why cease I straight to learn what sound invades?"

Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends,
With forceful strength a branch the hero rends;
Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.
As when a lion in the midnight hours,
Beat by rude blasts and wet with wintry showers,
Descends terrific from the mountain's brow;
With living flames his rolling eye-balls glow;
With conscious strength elate, he bends his way,
Majestically fierce, to seize his prey
(The steer or stag); or, with keen hunger bold,
Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold;
No less a terror, from the neighboring groves
(Rough from the tossing surge) Ulysses moves.
Urged on by want, and recent from the storms,
The brackish ooze his manly grace deforms.
Wide o'er the shore with many a piercing cry
To rocks, to caves, the frightened virgins fly;
All but the nymph; the nymph stood fix'd alone,
By Pallas arm'd with boldness not her own.
Meantime, in dubious thought, the king awaits,

THE ODYSSEY.

And self-considering, as he stands, debates;
Distant his mournful story to declare,
Or prostrate at her knee address the prayer.
But fearful to offend, by wisdom sway'd,
At awful distance he accosts the maid:
"If from the skies a goddess, or if earth
(Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend!

* * * *

I lift my suppliant hands;
For Misery, O queen! before thee stands.
Twice ten tempestuous nights I roll'd, resign'd
To roaring billows, and the warring wind;
Heaven bade the deep to spare; but heaven, my foe,
Spares only to inflict some mightier woe.
Inured to cares, to death in all its forms;
Outcast I rove, familiar with the storms.
Once more I view the face of human kind:
Oh, let soft pity touch thy generous mind!
Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand
Naked, defenceless, on a narrow land.
Propitious to my wants, a vest supply
To guard the wretched from the inclement sky:
So may the gods, who heaven and earth control,
Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,
On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed."

[Nausicaä Harkens, and in Pity Gives to Ulysses
Garments and Food.]--(BRYANT.)

And then the white-armed maid Nausicaä said:
"Since then, O stranger, thou art not malign
Of purpose nor weak-minded, * * * now that thou
Hast reached our lands, and art within our realm,
Thou shalt not lack for garments nor for aught
Due to a suppliant stranger in his need.

THE ODYSSEY.

The city I will show thee, and will name
Its dwellers—the Phæacians—they possess
The city; all the region lying around
Is theirs, and I am daughter of the prince
Alcinoüs, large of soul, to whom are given
The rule of the Phæacians and their power.”

So spake the damsel, and commanded thus
Her fair-haired maids: “Stay! whither do ye flee,
My handmaids? * * * This man comes to us
A wanderer and unhappy, and to him
Our cares are due. The stranger and the poor
Are sent by Jove, and slight regards to them
Are grateful. Maidens, give the stranger food
And drink, and take him to the river-side
To bathe where there is shelter from the wind.”

So spake the mistress; and they stayed their flight
And bade each other stand, and led the chief
Under a shelter as the royal maid,
Daughter of stout Alcinoüs, gave command,
And laid a cloak and tunic near the spot
To be his raiment, and a golden cruse
Of limpid oil. * * * Ulysses then
Washed the salt spray of ocean from his back
And his broad shoulders in the flowing stream,
And wiped away the sea-froth from his brows.

And when the bath was over, and his limbs
Had been anointed, and he had put on
The garments sent him by the spotless maid,
Jove’s daughter, Pallas, caused him to appear
Of statelier size and more majestic mien,
And bade the locks that crowned his head flow down,
Curling like blossoms of the hyacinth.
As when some skilful workman trained and taught
By Vulcan and Minerva in his art
Binds the bright silver with a verge of gold,

THE ODYSSEY.

And graceful is his handiwork, such grace
Did Pallas shed upon the hero's brow
And shoulders, as he passed along the beach,
And, glorious in his beauty and the pride
Of noble bearing, sat aloof. The maid
Admired, * * * *
And set before Ulysses food and wine.
The patient chief Ulysses ate and drank
Full eagerly, for he had fasted long.

[Ulysses, Guided by Nausicaä, Comes to the City
of King Alcinoüs.]—(COWPER.)

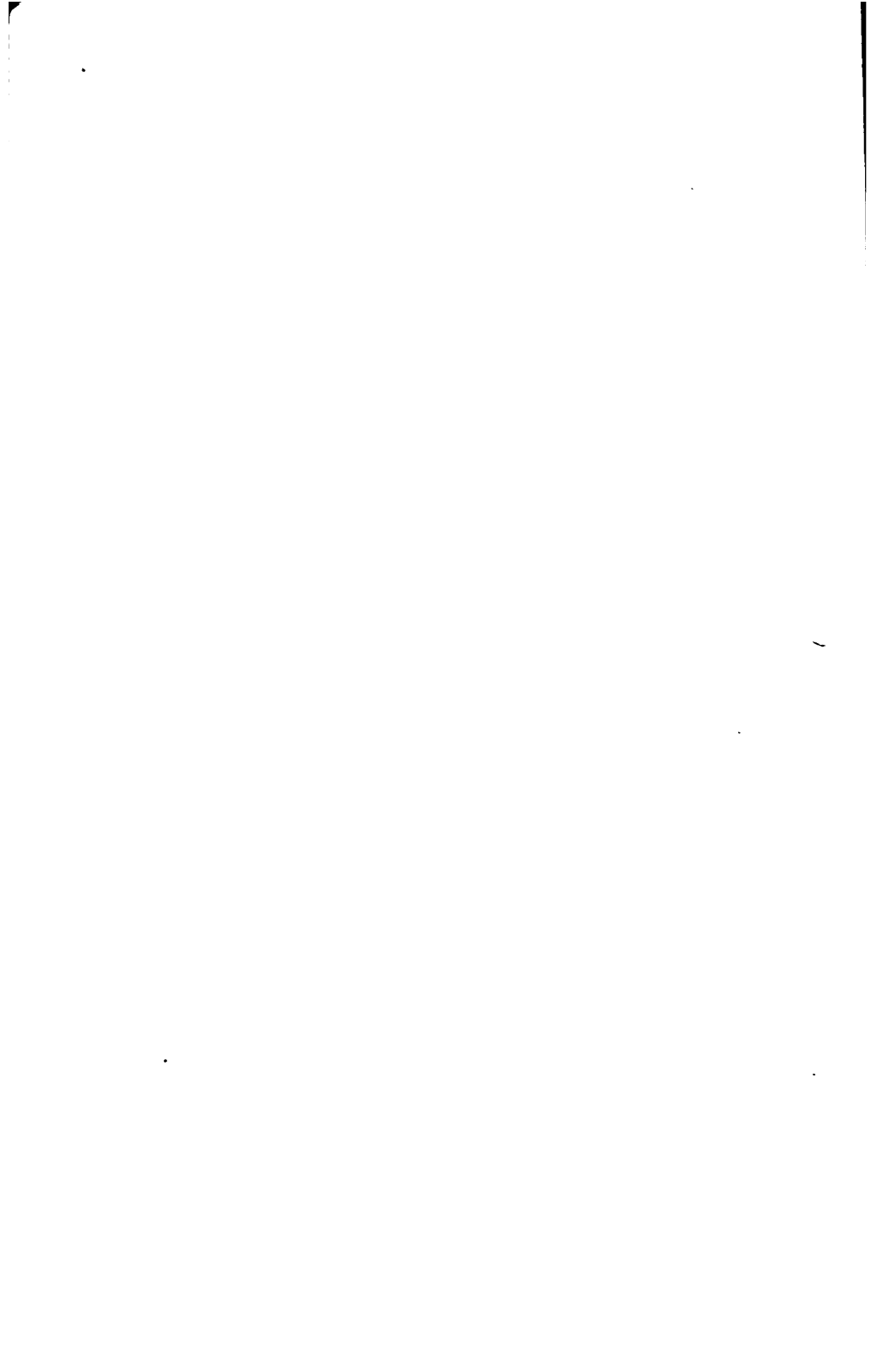
On other thoughts meantime intent, her charge
Of folded vestments neat the Princess placed
Within the royal wain, then yoked the mules,
And to her seat herself ascending call'd
Ulysses to depart, and thus she spake:

"Up, stranger! Seek the city. I will lead
Thy steps toward my royal Father's house. * * *
* * * Once within the court received
Pause not, but, with swift pace advancing, seek
My mother; she beside a column sits
In the hearth's blaze, twirling her fleecy threads
Tinged with sea-purple, bright, magnificent,
With all her maidens orderly behind.
There also stands my father's throne, on which
Seated, he drinks and banquets like a God.
Pass that; then suppliant clasp my mother's knees,
So shalt thou quickly win a glad return
To thy own home, however far remote.
Her favor once, and her kind aid secured,
Thenceforth thou may'st expect thy friends to see,
Thy dwelling, and thy native soil again."

So saying, she with her splendid scourge the mules

THE ODYSSEY.

Lash'd onward. They (the stream soon left behind,) With even footsteps graceful smote the ground; But so she ruled them, managing with art The scourge, as not to leave afar, although Following on foot, Ulysses and her train.



BOOK VII



BOOK VII: PART I

THE STORY

WHEN Pallas led Ulysses to the palace of the king, Alcinoüs. A wondrous place it was, with walls of brass and doors of gold, hanging on posts of silver; and on either side of the door were dogs of gold and silver, the work of Hephæstus, and against the wall, all along from the threshold to the inner chamber, were set seats, on which sat the chiefs of the Phæacians, feasting; and youths wrought in gold stood holding torches in their hands, to give light in the darkness. Fifty women were in the house grinding corn and weaving robes, for the women of the land are no less skilled to weave than are the men to sail the sea. And round about the house were gardens beautiful exceedingly, with orchards of fig, and apple, and pear, and pomegranate, and olive. Drought hurts them not, nor frost, and harvest comes after harvest without ceasing. Also there was a vineyard, and some of the grapes were parching in the sun, and some were being gathered, and some again were but just turning red. And there were beds of all manner of flowers, and in the midst of all were two fountains which never failed.

These things Ulysses regarded for a space, and then passed into the hall. And there the chiefs of Phæacia were drinking their last cup to Hermes. Quickly he passed through them, and put his hands on the knees of Areté and said—and as he spake the mist cleared

THE ODYSSEY.

from about him, and all that were in the hall beheld him—

"I am a suppliant to thee, and to thy husband, and to thy guests. The gods bless thee and them, and grant you to live in peace, and that your children should come peacefully after you. Only, do you send me home to my native country."

And he sat down in the ashes of the hearth. Then for a space all were silent, but at the last spake Echeneüs, who was the oldest man in the land—

"King Alcinoüs, this ill becomes you that this man should sit in the ashes of the hearth. Raise him, and bid him sit upon a seat, and let us pour out to Father Zeus, who is the friend of suppliants, and let the keeper of the house give him meat and drink."

And Alcinoüs did so, bidding his eldest born, Laodamas, rise from his seat. And an attendant poured water on his hands, and the keeper of the house gave him meat and drink. Then, when all had poured out to Father Zeus, King Alcinoüs said that they would take counsel on the morrow about sending this stranger to his home. And they answered that it should be so, and each went to his home. Only Ulysses was left in the hall, and Alcinoüs and Areté with him. And Areté saw his cloak and tunic that she and her maidens had made them, and said—

"Whence art thou, stranger? and who gave thee these garments?"

So Ulysses told her how he had come from the island of Calypso, and what he had suffered, and how Nausicaä had found him on the shore, and had guided him to the city.

But Alcinoüs blamed the maiden that she had not herself brought him to the house. "For thou wast her suppliant," he said.

"Nay," said Ulysses; "she would have brought me,

THE ODYSSEY.

but I would not, fearing thy wrath." For he would not have the maiden blamed.

Then said Alcinoüs, "I am not one to be angered for such cause. Gladly would I have such a one as thou art to be my son-in-law, and I would give him house and wealth. But no one would I stay against his will. And as for sending thee to thy home, that is easy; for thou shalt sleep, and they shall take thee meanwhile."

And after this they slept.

BOOK VII: PART II

THE POEM

[Ulysses, Marveling at the Splendors of King Alcinoüs' Palace, Implores the Protection of Queen Areté and the King.](—WORSLEY.)

MUCH did Odysseus, as he passed, admire
The smooth wide havens, and the glorious fleet
Wherewith those mariners the great deep tire,
Yea, and the spaces where their heroes meet,
And the long lofty wondrous walls, complete
With bastion fair and towery palisade.
All these he viewed, till at the last his feet
She at the king's illustrious mansion stayed.

* * * *

And in his breast his stormy heart beat fast,
He pausing, ere his feet the brazen threshold passed.

For, like the sun's fire or the moon's, a light
Far streaming through the high-roofed house did pass
From the long basement to the topmost height.
There on each side ran walls of flaming brass,
Zoned on the summit with a blue bright mass
Of cornice; and the doors were framed of gold;
Where, underneath, the brazen floor doth glass
Silver pilasters, which with grace uphold
Lintel of silver framed; the ring was burnished gold.

THE ODYSSEY.

And logs on each side of the doors there stand,
Silver and gold, the which in ancient day
Hephæstus wrought with cunning brain and hand,
And set for sentinels to hold the way.
Death cannot tame them, nor the years decay.
And from the shining threshold thrones were set,
Skirting the walls in lustrous long array,
On to the far room, where the women met,
With many a rich robe strewn and woven coverlet.

* * * *

Standing, Odysseus gazed his fill, then passed
The entrance, and behold! the chieftains pour
Wine to the keen-eyed Argus-slayer, the last
Ere they retire for sleep. He onward bore,
Wrapt in Athené's mist, and paused before
Areté and Alcinoüs. There the queen
He clasping by the knees crouched on the floor;
Then the mist melted, which did erewhile screen
His form, and all stood breathless when the man was
seen.

He suppliant spake: "Areté, at thy knees,
Before thy husband and thy guests, I bow,
Child of divine Rhexenor! O to these
May Heaven grant glory in their lifetime now,
And children after them with wealth endow,
Heirs of the office which the people gave!
But ye kind issue to my prayers allow!
Ship to convey me to my home I crave,
Who, friendless many a year, grieve sore by land and
wave."

* * * *

When the divine strength of Alcinoüs heard,
He rose and took the stranger's hand anon,
Hand of Odysseus, proved in deed and word,

THE ODYSSEY.

And made him rest upon a glittering throne,
Displacing brave Laodamas his son,
Who always sat there, at his father's side,
His best-beloved; and of the handmaids one
From golden urn, well-chased and beautified,
Over a silver basin poured the lustral tide,

And spread before him the well-polished board,
Whereon the staid house-dame provision set,
Whate'er of best the palace might afford.

* * * *

When they had poured and drunk, Alcinoüs said:
"Hear me, Phæacian chiefs, while I declare
The meaning of my mind.—Hence now to bed;
And, with more elders hither summonèd,
To-morrow we our guest will entertain
Here in the halls, and sacrifices spread
Before the gods, and convoy o'er the main.
Remember, that at last forgetting grief and pain,

"Hence to his native land, however far,
Safe in our guidance he may sail the sea
Rejoicing, and no danger may debar,
Nor midway onset of calamity,
His foot from landing. There high Destiny
Must rule her own, whose thought can no one scan;
And he must bear the doom and the decree
Which at his hour of birth the dark Fates span,
When first his mother knew that she had borne a man."

* * * *

Thus he his lordly purpose did declare,
And on much-toiled divine Odysseus came
Sweet stirrings at the heart, who straight with prayer
Answered, and spake a word, and named a name:

THE ODYSSEY.

"Zeus father! O that he make good the same!
Grant that Alcinoüs by his promise stand!
So by this deed his everlasting fame
Shall walk the plenteous earth from land to land,
And I shall sail in safety to my native strand."

But when their mutual converse now was o'er,
The white-armed queen her maiden bade prepare
A couch beneath the echoing corridor,
And thereon spread the crimson carpets fair,
Then the wide coverlets of richness rare,
And to arrange the blankets warm and white,
Wherein who sleepeth straight forgets his care.
They then, each holding in her hand a light,
From the great hall pass forth and spread the robes
aright.

Then standing near Odysseus thus they spake:
"Now is thy couch well-furnished, stranger-guest;
Haste, to refreshful sleep thyself betake."
Glad sounded in his ears their sweet request.
There he, divine one, late so sore distressed,
Slept all night long by griefs unvisited,
Stretched loosely on the carven couch at rest.
Alcinoüs to his far-off chamber sped,
And there his lady wife made ready and shared his bed.



BOOK VIII



BOOK VIII: PART I

THE STORY

AND when the night had fled before the rising sun the king called the chiefs to an assembly, and told them of his purpose, that he would send this stranger to his home, for that it was their wont to show such kindness to such as needed it. And he bade fifty and two of the younger men make ready a ship, and that the elders should come to his house, and bring Demodocus, the minstrel, with them, for that he was minded to make a great feast for this stranger before he departed. So the youths made ready the ship. And afterwards there were gathered together a great multitude, so that the palace was filled from the one end to the other. And Alcinoüs slew for them twelve sheep and eight swine and two oxen. And when they had feasted to the full, the minstrel sang to them of how Achilles and Ulysses had striven together with fierce words at a feast, and how King Agamemnon was glad, seeing that so the prophecy of Apollo was fulfilled, saying that when valor and counsel should fall out, the end of Troy should come. But when Ulysses heard the song, he wept, holding his mantle before his face.

This Alcinoüs perceived, and said to the chiefs, "Now that we have feasted and delighted ourselves with song, let us go forth, that this stranger may see that we are skillful in boxing and wrestling and running."

THE ODYSSEY.

So they went forth, a herald leading Demodocus by the hand, for the minstrel was blind. Then stood up many Phæacian youths, and the fairest and strongest of them all was Laodamas, eldest son to the king, and after him Euryalus. And next they ran a race, and Clytoneus was the swiftest. And among the wrestlers Euryalus was the best, and of the boxers, Laodamas. And in throwing the quoit, Elatrius excelled, and in leaping at the bar, Amphialus.

Then Laodamas, Euryalus urging him, said to Ulysses, "Father, wilt thou not try thy skill in some game, and put away the trouble from thy heart?"

But Ulysses answered, "Why askest thou this? I think of my troubles rather than of sport, and sit among you, caring only that I may see again my home."

Then said Euryalus, "And in very truth, stranger, thou hast not the look of a wrestler or boxer. Rather would one judge thee to be some trader, who sails over the sea for gain."

"Nay," answered Ulysses, "this is ill said. So true is it that the gods give not all gifts to all men, beauty to one and sweet speech to another. Fair of form art thou, no god could better thee; but thou speakest idle words. I am not unskilled in these things, but stood among the first in the old days; but since have I suffered much in battle and shipwreck. Yet will I make trial of my strength, for thy words have angered me."

Whereupon he took a quoit, heavier far than such as the Phæacians were wont to throw, and sent it with a whirl. It hurtled through the air, so that the brave Phæacians crouched to the ground in fear, and fell far beyond all the rest.

Then said Ulysses, "Come now, I will contend in wrestling or boxing, or even in the race, with any man in Phæacia, save Laodamas only, for he is my friend."

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I can shoot with the bow, and only Philoctetes could surpass me; and I can cast a spear as far as other men can shoot an arrow. But as for the race, it may be that some one might outrun me, for I have suffered much on the sea."

But they all were silent, till the king stood up and said, "Thou hast spoken well. But we men of Phæacia are not mighty to wrestle or to box; only we are swift of foot, and skilful to sail upon the sea. And we love feasts, and dances, and the harp, and gay clothing, and the bath. In these things no man may surpass us."

Then the king bade Demodocus the minstrel sing again. And when he had done so, the king's two sons, Alius and Laodamas, danced together; and afterwards they played with the ball, throwing it into the air, cloud high, and catching it right skilfully.

And afterwards the king said, "Let us each give this stranger a mantle and a tunic and a talent of gold, and let Euryalus make his peace with words and with a gift."

And they all (now there were twelve princes, and Alcinoüs the thirteenth) said that it should be so; also Euryalus gave Ulysses a sword with a hilt of silver and a scabbard of ivory. And after this Ulysses went to the bath, and then they all sat down to the feast. But as he went to the hall, Nausicaä, fair as a goddess, met him and said—

"Hail, stranger; thou wilt remember me in thy native country; for thou owest me thanks for thy life."

And he answered, "Every day in my native country will I remember thee, for indeed, fair maiden, thou didst save my life."

And when they were set down to the feast, Ulysses sent a portion of the chine which the king had caused to be set before him to the minstrel Demodocus, with a message that he should sing to them of the horse of

THE ODYSSEY.

wood which Epeius made, Athené helping him, and how Ulysses brought it into Troy, full of men of war who should destroy the city.

Then the minstrel sang how that some of the Greeks sailed away, having set fire to their tents, and some hid themselves in the horse with Ulysses, and how the men of Troy sat around, taking counsel what they should do with it, and some judged that they should rip it open, and some that they should throw it from the hill-top, and others again that they should leave it to be a peace-offering to the gods; and how the Greeks issued forth from their lurking-place and spoiled the city, and how Ulysses and Menelaüs went to the house of Deiphobus.

So he sang, and Ulysses wept to hear the tale. And when Alcinoüs perceived that he wept, he bade Demodocus cease from his song, for that some that were there liked it not. And to Ulysses he said that he should tell them who was his father and his mother, and from what land he came, and what was his name. All these things Ulysses told them, and all that he had done and suffered, down to the time when the Princess Nausicaä found him on the river shore. And when he had ended, King Alcinoüs bade that the princes should give Ulysses yet other gifts; and after that went each man to his house to sleep.

BOOK VIII: PART II

THE POEM

[Demodocus, the Bard, Sings of Troy and Moves
Ulysses to Tears.]—(COWPER.)

BUT when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Blush'd in the East, then from his bed arose
The sacred might of the Phæacian King.
Then uprose also, city-waster Chief,
Ulysses, whom the King Alcinoüs
Led forth to council. * * *

Soon the portico, the court, the hall
Were fill'd with multitudes of young and old,
For whose regale the mighty monarch slew
Two beeves, twelve sheep, and twice four fatted brawns
They flay'd them first, then busily their task
Administering, prepared the joyous feast.
And now the herald came, leading with care
The tuneful bard; dear to the muse was he,
Who yet appointed him both good and ill,
Took from him sight, but gave him strains divine.
For him Pontonoüs in the midst disposed
An argent-studded throne, thrusting it close
To a tall column, where he hung his lyre
Above his head, and taught him where it hung.
He sat before him, next, a polish'd board
And basket, and a goblet fill'd with wine
For his own use, and at his own command.
Then, all assail'd at once the ready feast,

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And when nor hunger more nor thirst they felt,
Then came the muse, and roused the bard to sing
Exploits of men renown'd; it was a song,
In that day to the highest heaven extoll'd.
He sang of a dispute kindled between
The son of Peleus, and Læertes' son,
Both seated at a feast held to the Gods.
That contest Agamemnon, King of men,
Between the noblest of Achaia's host
Hearing, rejoiced; for when in Pytho erst
He pass'd the marble threshold to consult
The oracle of Apollo, such dispute
The voice divine had to his ear announced;
For then it was that, first, the storm of war
Came rolling on, ordain'd long time to afflict
Troy and the Grecians, by the will of Jove.

So sang the bard illustrious; then his robe
Of purple dye with both hands o'er his head
Ulysses drew, behind its ample folds
Veiling his face, through fear to be observed
By the Phæacians weeping at the song;
And ever as the bard harmonious ceased,
He wiped his tears, and, drawing from his brows
The mantle, pour'd libation to the Gods.
But when the Chiefs (for they delighted heard
Those sounds,) solicited again the bard,
And he renew'd the strain, then covering close
His countenance, as before, Ulysses wept.

* * * * *

* * * Tear after tear
Fell on his cheeks. As when a woman weeps
Her husband, who hath fallen in defence
Of his own city and his babes before
The gates; she, sinking, folds him in her arms,
And, gazing on him as he pants and dies,

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Shrieks at the sight; meantime, the enemy
Smiting her shoulders with the spear, to toil
Command her and to bondage far away,
And her cheek fades with horror at the sound;
Ulysses, so, from his moist lids let fall
The frequent tear.

Unnoticed by the rest
Those drops, but not by King Alcinoüs, fell,
Who, seated at his side, his heavy sighs
Remark'd, and to the Phæacians thus spake.
"Phæacian Chiefs and Senators, attend!
Now let Demodocus enjoin his harp
Silence, for not alike grateful to all
His music sounds; during our feast, and since
The bard divine began, continual flow
The stranger's sorrows, by remembrance caused
Of some great woe which wraps his soul around.

* * * *

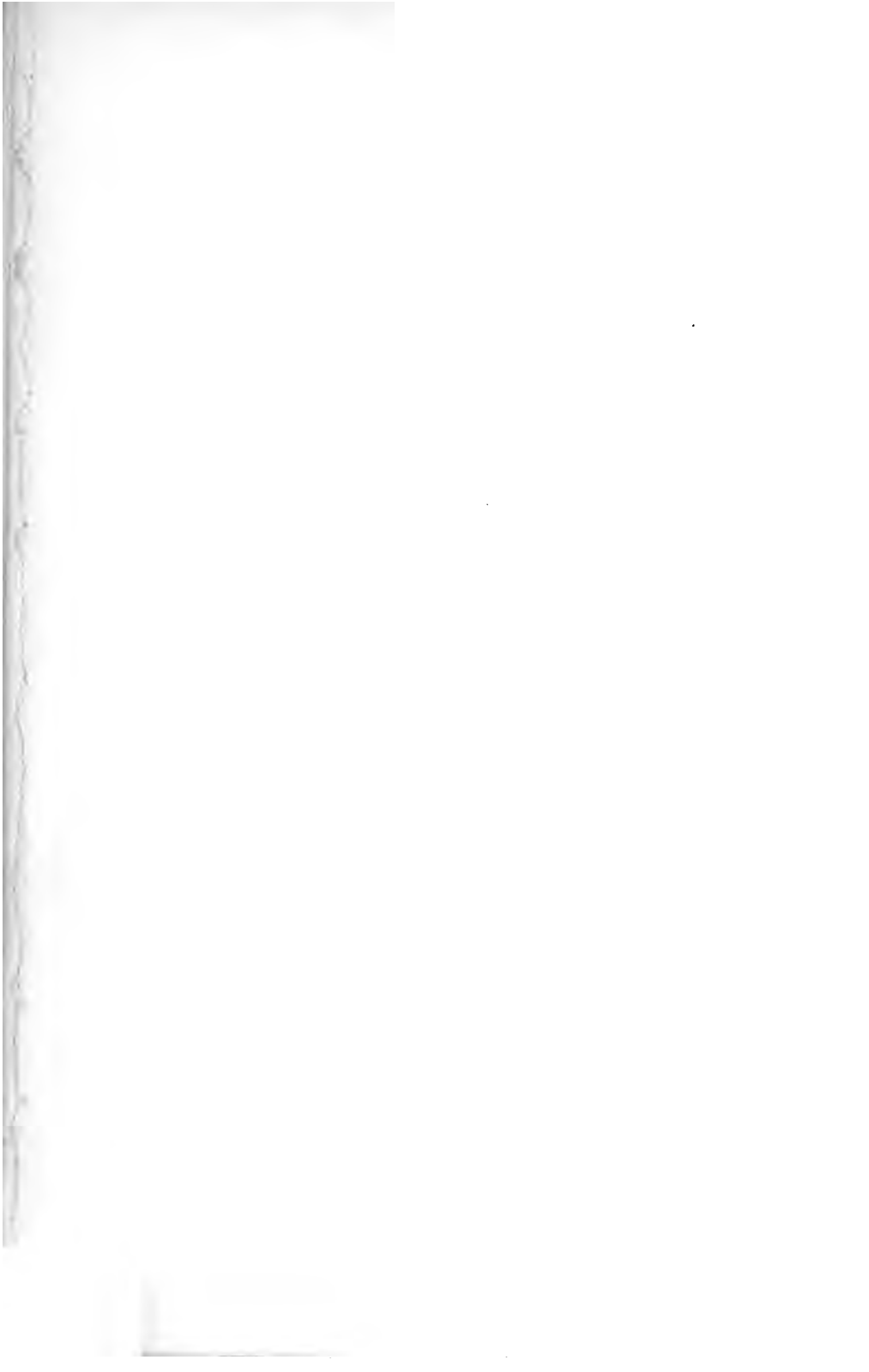
And thou conceal not, artfully reserved,
The name by which thy father, mother, friends
Have known thee: * * *
Thy country, people, city, tell; the mark
At which my ships, intelligent, shall aim,
That they may bear thee thither. * * *
But tell me truth, and plainly: Where have been
Thy wanderings? in what regions of the earth
Hast thou arrived? what nations hast thou seen,
What cities? say, how many hast thou found
Harsh, savage, and unjust? how many, kind
To strangers, and disposed to fear the Gods?
Say also, from what secret grief of heart
Thy sorrows flow, oft as thou hear'st the fate
Of the Achaïans, or of Ilium sung?
That fate the Gods prepared; they spin the thread
Of man's destruction, that in after-days

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The bard may make the sad event his theme.
Perish'd thy father or thy brother there?
Or hast thou at the siege of Ilium lost
Father-in-law or son-in-law? for such
Are next and dearest to us after those
Who share our own descent; or was the dead
Thy bosom-friend, whose heart was as thy own?
For worthy as a brother of our love
The constant friend and the discreet I deem."

BOOK IX

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BOOK IX: PART I

THE STORY

AFTER the fall of Troy Ulysses was well-nigh the last to sail, for he had tarried many days to do pleasure to Agamemnon, lord of all the Greeks. Twelve ships he had with him—twelve he had brought to Troy—and in each there were some fifty men, being scarce half of those that had sailed in them in the old days, so many valiant heroes slept the last sleep by Simois and Scamander, and in the plain and on the sea-shore, slain in battle or by the shafts of Apollo.

First they sailed north-west to the Thracian coast, where the Ciconians dwelt, who had helped the men of Troy. Their city they took, and in it much plunder, slaves and oxen, and jars of fragrant wine, and might have escaped unhurt, but that they stayed to hold revel on the shore. For the Ciconians gathered their neighbors, being men of the same blood, and did battle with the invaders, and drove them to their ship. And when Ulysses numbered his men, he found that he had lost six out of each ship.

Scarce had he set out again when the wind began to blow fiercely; so, seeing a smooth sandy beach, they drave the ships ashore and dragged them out of reach of the waves, and waited till the storm should abate. And the third morning being fair, they sailed again, and journeyed prosperously till they came to the very

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end of the great Peloponnesian land, where Cape Malea looks out upon the southern sea. But contrary currents baffled them, so that they could not round it, and the north wind blew so strongly that they must fain drive before it. And on the tenth day they came to the land where the lotus grows—a wondrous fruit, of which whosoever eats cares not to see country or wife or children again. Now the Lotus-eaters, for so they call the people of the land, were a kindly folk, and gave of the fruit to some of the sailors, not meaning them any harm, but thinking it to be the best that they had to give. These, when they had eaten, said that they would not sail any more over the sea; which, when the wise Ulysses heard, he bade their comrades bind them and carry them, sadly complaining, to the ships.

Then, the wind having abated, they took to their oars, and rowed for many days till they came to the country where the Cyclopes dwell. Now, a mile or so from the shore there was an island, very fair and fertile, but no man dwells there or tills the soil, and in the island a harbor where a ship may be safe from all winds, and at the head of the harbor a stream falling from the rock, and whispering alders all about it. Into this the ships passed safely, and were hauled upon the beach, and the crews slept by them, waiting for the morning. And the next day they hunted the wild goats, of which there was great store on the island, and feasted right merrily on what they caught, with draughts of red wine which they had carried off from the town of the Ciconians.

But on the morrow, Ulysses, for he was ever fond of adventure, and would know of every land to which he came what manner of men they were that dwelt there, took one of his twelve ships and bade row to the land. There was a great hill sloping to the shore, and there rose up here and there a smoke from the caves

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where the Cyclopes dwelt apart, holding no converse with each other, for they were a rude and savage folk, but ruled each his own household, not caring for others. Now very close to the shore was one of these caves, very huge and deep, with laurels round about the mouth, and in front a fold with walls built of rough stone, and shaded by tall oaks and pines. So Ulysses chose out of the crew the twelve bravest, and bade the rest guard the ship, and went to see what manner of dwelling this was, and who abode there. He had his sword by his side, and on his shoulder a mighty skin of wine, sweet-smelling and strong, with which he might win the heart of some fierce savage, should he chance to meet with such, as indeed his prudent heart forecasted that he might.

So they entered the cave, and judged that it was the dwelling of some rich and skilful shepherd. For within there were pens for the young of the sheep and of the goats, divided all according to their age, and there were baskets full of cheeses, and full milkpails ranged along the wall. But the Cyclops himself was away in the pastures. Then the companions of Ulysses besought him that he would depart, taking with him, if he would, a store of cheeses and sundry of the lambs and of the kids. But he would not, for he wished to see, after his wont, what manner of host this strange shepherd might be. And truly he saw it to his cost!

It was evening when the Cyclops came home, a mighty giant, twenty feet in height, or more. On his shoulder he bore a vast bundle of pine logs for his fire, and threw them down outside the cave with a great crash, and drove the flocks within, and closed the entrance with a huge rock, which twenty wagons and more could not bear. Then he milked the ewes and all the she-goats, and half of the milk he curdled for cheese. and half he set ready for himself, when he

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should sup. Next he kindled a fire with the pine logs, and the flame lighted up all the cave, showing him Ulysses and his comrades.

"Who are ye?" cried Polyphemus, for that was the giant's name. "Are ye traders, or, haply, pirates?"

For in those days it was not counted shame to be called a pirate.

Ulysses shuddered at the dreadful voice and shape, but bore him bravely, and answered, "We are no pirates, mighty sir, but Greeks, sailing back from Troy, and subjects of the great King Agamemnon, whose fame is spread from one end of heaven to the other. And we are come to beg hospitality of thee in the name of Zeus, who rewards or punishes hosts and guests according as they be faithful the one to the other, or no."

"Nay," said the giant, "it is but idle talk to tell me of Zeus and the other gods. We Cyclopes take no account of gods, holding ourselves to be much better and stronger than they. But come, tell me where have you left your ship?"

But Ulysses saw his thought when he asked about the ship, how he was minded to break it, and take from them all hope of flight. Therefore he answered him craftily—

"Ships have we none, for that which was ours King Poseidon brake, driving it on a jutting rock on this coast, and we whom thou seest are all that are escaped from the waves."

Polyphemus answered nothing, but without more ado caught up two of the men, as a man might catch up the whelps of a dog, and dashed them on the ground, and tore them limb from limb, and devoured them, with huge draughts of milk between, leaving not a morsel, not even the very bones. But the others, when they saw the dreadful deed, could only weep and pray to Zeus

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for help. And when the giant had ended his foul meal, he lay down among his sheep and slept.

Then Ulysses questioned much in his heart whether he should slay the monster as he slept, for he doubted not that his good sword would pierce to the giant's heart, mighty as he was. But, being very wise, he remembered that, should he slay him, he and his comrades would yet perish miserably. For who should move away the great rock that lay against the door of the cave? So they waited till the morning. And the monster woke, and milked his flock, and afterwards, seized two men, devoured them for his meal. Then he went to the pastures, but put the great rock on the mouth of the cave, just as a man puts down the lid upon his quiver.

All that day the wise Ulysses was thinking what he might best do to save himself and his companions, and the end of his thinking was this: there was a mighty pole in the cave, green wood of an olive tree, big as a ship's mast, which Polyphemus purposed to use, when the smoke should have dried it, as a walking staff. Of this he cut off a fathom's length, and his comrades sharpened it and hardened it in the fire, and then hid it away. At evening the giant came back, and drove his sheep into the cave, nor left the rams outside, as he had been wont to do before, but shut them in. And having duly done his shepherd's work, he made his cruel feast as before. Then Ulysses came forward with the wine-skin in his hand, and said—

"Drink, Cyclops, now that thou hast feasted. Drink, and see what precious things we had in our ship. But no one hereafter will come to thee with such like, if thou dealest with strangers as cruelly as thou hast dealt with us."

Then the Cyclops drank, and was mightily pleased, and said, "Give me again to drink, and tell me thy

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name, stranger, and I will give thee a gift such as a host should give. In good truth this is a rare liquor. We, too, have vines, but they bear not wine like this, which indeed must be such as the gods drink in heaven."

Then Ulysses gave him the cup again, and he drank. Thrice he gave it to him, and thrice he drank, not knowing what it was, and how it would work within his brain.

Then Ulysses spake to him. "Thou didst ask my name, Cyclops. Lo! my name is No Man. And now that thou knowest my name, thou shouldst give me thy gift."

And he said, "My gift shall be that I will eat thee last of all thy company."

And as he spake he fell back in a drunken sleep. Then Ulysses bade his comrades be of good courage, for the time was come when they should be delivered. And they thrust the stake of olive wood into the fire till it was ready, green as it was, to burst into flame, and they thrust it into the monster's eye; for he had but one eye, and that in the midst of his forehead, with the eyebrow below it. And Ulysses leant with all his force upon the stake, and thrust it in with might and main. And the burning wood hissed in the eye, just as the red-hot iron hisses in the water when a man seeks to temper steel for a sword.

Then the giant leapt up, and tore away the stake, and cried aloud, so that all the Cyclopes who dwelt on the mountain side heard him and came about his cave, asking him, "What aileth thee, Polyphemus, that thou makest this uproar in the peaceful night, driving away sleep? Is any one robbing thee of thy sheep, or seeking to slay thee by craft or force?"

And the giant answered, "No Man slays me by craft."

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"Nay, but," they said, "if no man does thee wrong, we cannot help thee. The sickness which great Zeus may send, who can avoid? Pray to our father, Poseidon, for help."

Then they departed; and Ulysses was glad at heart for the good success of his device, when he said that he was No Man.

But the Cyclops rolled away the great stone from the door of the cave, and sat in the midst stretching out his hands, to feel whether perchance the men within the cave would seek to go out among the sheep.

Long did Ulysses think how he and his comrades should best escape. At last he lighted upon a good device, and much he thanked Zeus for that this once the giant had driven the rams with the other sheep into the cave. For, these being great and strong, he fastened his comrades under the bellies of the beasts, tying them with osier twigs, of which the giant made his bed. One ram he took, and fastened a man beneath it, and two others he set, one on either side. So he did with the six, for but six were left out of the twelve who had ventured with him from the ship. And there was one mighty ram, far larger than all the others, and to this Ulysses clung, grasping the fleece tight with both his hands. So they waited for the morning. And when the morning came, the rams rushed forth to the pasture; but the giant sat in the door and felt the back of each as it went by, nor thought to try what might be underneath. Last of all went the great ram. And the Cyclops knew him as he passed, and said—

"How is this, thou, who art the leader of the flock? Thou art not wont thus to lag behind. Thou hast always been the first to run to the pastures and streams in the morning, and the first to come back to the fold when evening fell; and now thou art last of all. Perhaps thou art troubled about thy master's eye, which

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some wretch—No Man, they call him—has destroyed, having first mastered me with wine. He has not escaped, I ween, I would that thou couldst speak, and tell me where he is lurking. Of a truth I would dash out his brains upon the ground, and avenge me of this No Man."

So speaking, he let him pass out of the cave. But when they were out of reach of the giant, Ulysses loosed his hold of the ram, and then unbound his comrades. And they hastened to their ship, not forgetting to drive before them a good store of the Cyclops' fat sheep. Right glad were those that had abode by the ship to see them. Nor did they lament for those that had died, though they were fain to do so, for Ulysses forbade, fearing lest the noise of their weeping should betray them to the giant, where they were. Then they all climbed into the ship, and sitting well in order on the benches, smote the sea with their oars, laying-to right lustily, that they might the sooner get away from the accursed land. And when they had rowed a hundred yards or so, so that a man's voice could yet be heard by one who stood upon the shore, Ulysses stood up in the ship and shouted—

"He was no coward, O Cyclops, whose comrades thou didst so foully slay in thy den. Justly art thou punished, monster, that devourest thy guests in thy dwelling. May the gods make thee suffer yet worse things than these!"

Then the Cyclops, in his wrath, broke off the top of a great hill, a mighty rock, and hurled it where he had heard the voice. Right in front of the ship's bow it fell, and a great wave rose as it sank, and washed the ship back to the shore. But Ulysses seized a long pole with both hands and pushed the ship from the land, and bade his comrades ply their oars, nodding with his head, for he was too wise to speak, lest the Cyclops

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should know where they were. Then they rowed with all their might and main.

And when they had gotten twice as far as before, Ulysses made as if he would speak again; but his comrades sought to hinder him, saying, "Nay, my lord, anger not the giant any more. Surely we thought before we were lost, when he threw the great rock, and washed our ship back to the shore. And if he hear thee now, he may crush our ship and us, for the man throws a mighty bolt, and throws it far."

But Ulysses would not be persuaded, but stood up and said, "Hear, Cyclops! If any man ask who blinded thee, say that it was the warrior Ulysses, son of Laertes, dwelling in Ithaca."

And the Cyclops answered with a groan, "Of a truth, the old oracles are fulfilled, for long ago there came to this land one Telemus, a prophet, and dwelt among us even to old age. This man foretold to me that one Ulysses would rob me of my sight. But I looked for a great man and a strong, who should subdue me by force, and now a weakling has done the deed, having cheated me with wine. But come thou hither, Ulysses, and I will be a host indeed to thee. Or, at least, may Poseidon give thee such a voyage to thy home as I would wish thee to have. For know that Poseidon is my sire. May be that he may heal me of my grievous wound."

And Ulysses said, "Would to God I could send thee down to the abode of the dead, where thou wouldst be past all healing, even from Poseidon's self."

Then Cyclops lifted up his hands to Poseidon and prayed—

"Hear me, Poseidon, if I am indeed thy son and thou my father. May this Ulysses never reach his home! or, if the Fates have ordered that he should

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reach it, may he come alone, all his comrades lost, and come to find sore trouble in his house!"

And as he ended he hurled another mighty rock, which almost lighted on the rudder's end, yet missed it as by a hair's breadth. So Ulysses and his comrades escaped, and came to the island of the wild goats, where they found their comrades, who indeed had waited long for them, in sore fear lest they had perished. Then Ulysses divided amongst his company all the sheep which they had taken from the Cyclops. And all, with one consent, give him for his share the great ram which had carried him out of the cave, and he sacrificed it to Zeus. And all that day they feasted right merrily on the flesh of sheep and on sweet wine, and when the night was come, they lay down upon the shore and slept.

BOOK IX: PART II

THE POEM

[Ulysses Declares Himself to King Alcinoüs and
Relates His Adventures.](—(BRYANT.)

ULYSSES, the sagacious, answered thus:—

“O King Alcinoüs, * * *

“Thy mind is moved to ask

The story of the sufferings I have borne,
And that will wake my grief anew. What first.

What next, shall I relate? what last of all?

For manifold are the misfortunes cast

Upon me by the immortals. Let me first

Declare my name, that ye may know, and I

Perchance, before my day of death shall come,

May be your host, though dwelling far away.

I am Ulysses; * * * widely known to men

As quick in shrewd devices, and my fame

Hath reached to heaven. In sunny Ithaca

I dwell, where high Neritus, seen afar,

Rustles with woods. * * * Now let me speak

Of the calamitous voyage which the will

Of Jove ordained on my return from Troy.

[Many of Ulysses' Men Are Slain by the Ci-
conians.](—(BRYANT.)

“The wind that blew from the Trojan shore
Bore me to the Ciconians, who abode

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In Ismarus. I laid the city waste
And slew its dwellers, carried off their wives
And all their wealth, and parted them among
My men, that none might want an equal share.
And then I warned them with all haste to leave
The region. Madmen! they obeyed me not.

"And there they drank much wine, and on the beach
Slew many sheep and many slow-paced steers
With crumpled horns. Then the Ciconians called
To their Ciconian neighbors, braver men
Than they, and more in number, whose abode
Was on the mainland, trained to fight from steeds,
Or, if need were, on foot. In swarms they came,
Thick as new leaves on morning flowers in spring.
Then fell on our unhappy company
An evil fate from Jove, and many griefs.
They formed their lines, and fought at our good ships,
Where man encountered man with brazen spears.
While yet 'twas morning, and the holy light
Of day waxed brighter, we withstood the assault
And kept our ground, although more numerous they.
But when the sun was sloping toward the west
The enemy prevailed; the Achaian band
Was routed, and was made to flee. That day
They perished from each galley of our fleet
Six valiant men; the rest escaped with life."

[The Land of the Lotus, Which Maketh Them
That Eat Thereof Forget Home and Friends.]
—(WORSLEY.)

Then on our course we sail, distressed in heart,
Glad of our lives, yet grieving for the dead;
Nathless we list not from that shore depart,
Ere thrice with cries we hailed each fallen head

THE ODYSSEY.

Of those whose blood the fierce Ciconians shed
In the wide plain. Ere yet we ceased to weep,
Zeus on our fleet the rage of Boreas dread
Launched, and with black clouds veiled the earth and
deep,
While the dark Night came rushing from heaven's
stormy steep.

Headlong the ships were driven with tattered sails.
These having furled we drave our keels ashore,
Fearing destruction from the raving gales.
Two nights and days we eating our heart's core
Lay till the third light beauteous Dawn upbore;
Then we the masts plant, and the white sails spread,
And sitting lean to the laborious oar.
Wind and good pilotage the brave barks sped;
Soon had I scatheless seen my native earth ahead,

But me the current and fell Boreas whirled,
Doubling Malea's cape, and far astray
Beyond the rude cliffs of Cythera hurled.
So for nine days along the watery way,
Teeming with monsters, me the winds affray
And with destruction ever seem to overwhelm:
But, on the afternoon of the tenth day,
We reached, borne downward with an easy helm,
Land of the flowery food, the Lotus-eating realm.
Anon we step forth on the dear mainland,

And drew fresh water from the springs, and there,
Seated at ease along the silent strand,
Not far from the swift ships our meal prepare.
Soon having tasted of the welcome fare,
I with the herald brave companions twain
Sent to explore what manner of men they were,
Who, on the green earth couched beside the main,
Seemed ever with sweet food their lips to entertain.

THE ODYSSEY.

Who, when they came on the delightful place
Where those sat feeding by the barren wave,
There mingled with the Lotus-eating race;
Who nought of ruin for our comrades brave
Dreamed in their minds, but of the Lotus gave;
And whoso tasted of their flowery meat
Cared not with tidings to return, but clave
Fast to that tribe, for ever fain to eat,
Reckless of home-return, the tender Lotus sweet.

These sorely weeping by main strength we bore
Back to the hollow ships with all our speed,
And thrust them bound with cords upon the floor,
Under the benches: then the rest I lead
On board and bid them to the work give heed,
Lest others, eating of the Lotus, yearn
Always to linger in that land, and feed,
Careless for ever of the home-return:
Then, bending to their oars, the foamy deep they spurn.

[Coming to the Land of the Cyclopes, They Spy
the Cave Where Dwells the Savage Monster,
Polyphemus.](—(WORSLEY.)

Thence we sailed onward overwhelmed in heart,
And to the land of the Cyclopes came,
An undiscerning people, void of art
In life, and trampers on the sacred claim
Of laws which men for civil uses frame.
Scorners of common weal no bounds they keep,
Nor learn with labors the rude earth to tame;
Who neither plant nor plough nor sow nor reap;
Still in the gods they trust, still careless wake and sleep.

There all good fruits on the spontaneous soil
Fed by the rain of Zeus forever grow;

THE ODYSSEY.

Unsown, untended, corn and wine and oil
Spring to their hand; but they no councils know
Nor justice, but forever lawless go.
Housed in the hills they neither buy nor sell,
No kindly offices demand or show;
Each in the hollow cave where he doth dwell
Gives law to wife and children, as he thinketh well.

* * * *

And on the land of the Cyclopes near
We looked, and saw their smoke, and heard their
hum.
Also the bleatings of their flocks we hear,
Till the ambrosial Night made all things dumb.
But when the rosy-fingered Dawn was come,
I called my friends, and said: "Stay ye the rest,
While I go forward to explore with some,
Mine own ship's crew, what folk this shore infest,
Despiteful, wild, unjust, or of a gentle breast."

* * * *

Then, sitting, to the oars' long sweep they bend,
And smite in unison the billows hoar.
Right quickly to the continent we wend;
And lo! a huge deep cave our eyes before,
Shaded about with laurels, very near the shore.

[Ulysses and Twelve Comrades Enter the Cyclops'
Cave. Returning, he Imprisons Them by
Closing the Entrance with a Great Rock.]—
(COWPER.)

In that cavern slumbering lay
Much cattle, sheep and goats, and a broad court
Enclosed it, fenced with stones from quarries hewn,
With spiry firs, and oaks of ample bough.
Here dwelt a giant vast, who far remote
His flocks fed solitary, converse none

THE ODYSSEY.

Desiring; sullen, savage, and unjust.
Monster, in truth, he was, hideous in form,
Resembling less a man by Cere's gift
Sustain'd, than some aspiring mountain-crag
Tufted with wood, and standing all alone.
Enjoining, then, my people to abide
Fast by the ship, which they should closely guard,
I went; but not without a goat-skin fill'd
With sable wine, which I had erst received
From Maron. * * *

No fewer than twelve jars with wine replete,
Rich, unadulterate, drink for Gods; nor knew
One servant, male or female, of that wine
In all his house; none knew it, save himself,
His wife, and the intendant of his stores.
Oft as they drank that luscious juice, he slaked
A single cup with twenty from the stream,
And, even then, the beaker breath'd abroad
A scent celestial, which whoever smelt,
Thenceforth no pleasure found it to abstain.
Charged with an ample goat-skin of this wine
I went, and with a wallet well supplied,
But felt a sudden presage in my soul
That, haply, with terrific force endued,
Some savage would appear, strange to the laws
And privileges of the human race.
Few steps convey'd us to his den, but him
We found not; he his flocks pastured abroad.
His cavern entering, we with wonder gazed
Around on all; his strainers hung with cheese
Distended wide; with lambs and kids his pens
Close-throng'd we saw, and folded separate
The various charge; the eldest all apart,
Apart the middle-aged, and the new-yea'n'd
Also apart. His pails and bowls with whey
Swam all, neat vessels into which he milk'd.

THE ODYSSEY.

Me, then, my friends first importuned to take
A portion of his cheeses, then to drive
Forth from the sheep-cotes to the rapid bark
His kids and lambs, and plough the brine again.
But me they moved not, happier had they moved!
I wish'd to see him, and to gain, perchance,
Some pledge of hospitality at his hands,
Whose form was such, as should not much bespeak,
When he appear'd, our confidence or love.
Then, kindling fire, we offer'd to the Gods,
And of his cheeses eating, patient sat
Till home he trudged from pasture. Charged he came
With dry wood bundled, an enormous load,
Fuel by which to sup. Loud crash'd the thorns
Which down he cast before the cavern's mouth,
To whose interior nooks we trembling flew.
At once he drove into his spacious cave
His batten'd flock, all those which gave him milk,
But all the males, both rams and goats, he left
Abroad, excluded from the cavern-yard.
Upheaving, next, a rocky barrier huge
To his cave's mouth, he thrust it home. That weight
Not all the oxen from its place had moved
Of twenty and two wains; with such a rock
Immense his den he closed. Then down he sat,
And as he milk'd his ewes and bleating goats
All in their turns, her yeanning gave to each;
Coagulating, then, with brisk dispatch,
The half of his new milk, he thrust the curd
Into his wicker sieves, but stored the rest
In pans and bowls—his customary drink.
His labors thus perform'd, he kindled, last,
His fuel, and discerning us, enquired:

THE ODYSSEY.

[The Cyclops, Spying the Strangers, Demands
Their Errand, and Ulysses Entreats Hospitality.]—(POPE.)

“What are ye, guests? on what adventure, say,
Thus far ye wander through the watery way?
Pirates, perhaps, who seek through seas unknown
The lives of others, and expose your own?”

“His voice like thunder through the cavern sounds:
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,
Appall’d at sight of more than mortal man!
At length, with heart recover’d, I began:

“From Troy’s famed fields, sad wanderers o’er the
main,

Behold the relics of the Grecian train:
Through various seas, by various perils toss’d,
And forced by storms, unwilling, on your coast;
Far from our destined course and native land,
Such was our fate, and such high Jove’s command!
Nor what we are befits us to disclaim,
Atrides’ friends (in arms a mighty name),
Who taught proud Troy and all her sons to bow;
Victors of late, but humble suppliants now!
Low at thy knee thy succor we implore;
Respect us, human, and relieve us, poor.
At least, some hospitable gift bestow,
’Tis what the happy to the unhappy owe:
’Tis what the gods require; those gods revere;
The poor and stranger are their constant care;
To Jove their cause, and their revenge belongs,
He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.’

“‘Fools that ye are’ (the savage thus replies,
His inward fury blazing in his eyes),
‘Or strangers, distant far from our abodes,

THE ODYSSEY.

To bid me reverence or regard the gods!
Know then, we Cyclops are a race above
Those air-bred people, and their goat-nursed Jove;
And learn, our power proceeds with thee and thine,
Not as he wills, but as ourselves incline.
But answer, the good ship that brought ye o'er,
Where lies she anchor'd; near or off the shore?"

"Thus he. His meditated fraud I find
(Versed in the turns of various human-kind):
And, cautious thus: 'Against a dreadful rock,
Fast by your shore the gallant vessel broke.
Scarce with these few I 'scaped; of all my train,
Whom angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main:
The scattered wreck the winds blew back again.'"

[The Cyclops Slays and Devours Some of the
Greeks, and Ulysses Plans to Destroy Him.]
—(WORSLEY.)

He nought replied, but of my comrades twain
Seized, and like dog-whelps on the cavern-floor
Dashed them: the wet ground steamed with blood
and brain.

Straight in his ravin limb from limb he tore
Fierce as a lion, and left nothing o'er;
Flesh, entrails, marrowy bones of men just killed,
Gorging. To Zeus our hands, bemoaning sore,
We raised in horror, while his maw he filled,
And human meat devoured, and milk in rivers swilled

After his meal he lay down with the sheep.
I, at the first, was minded to go near,
And in his liver slake my drawn sword deep;
But soon another mind made me forbear;
For so should we have gained destruction sheer,

THE ODYSSEY.

Since never from the doorway could we move
With all our strength the stone which he set there.
We all night long with groans our anguish prove,
Till rosy-fingered Dawn shone forth in heaven above

At dawn a fire he kindled in the cave,
And milked the famous flocks in order due,
And to each mother her young suckling gave.
But when the morning tasks were all gone through,
He, of my wretched comrades seizing two,
Gorged breakfast as became his savage taste,
And with the fat flocks from the cave withdrew.
Moved he the stone, and set it back with haste,
Lightly as on some quiver he the lid replaced;

Then toward the mountain turned with noise; but I
Sat brooding on revenge, and made my prayer
To Pallas, and resolved this scheme to try:
For a huge club beside the sheepfold there,
Green olive-wood, lay drying in his lair,
Cut for a staff to serve him out of doors,
Which we admiring to the mast compare
Of some wide merchantman with twenty oars,
Which the divine abysses of the deep explores.

Therefrom I severed as it were an ell,
And bade my comrades make it smooth and round.
Then to a tapering spire I shaped it well,
And the green timber in the flame embrowned
For hardness; and, where dung did most abound,
Deep in the cave the pointed stake concealed.
Anon my comrades cast their lots all round,
Which should with me the fiery weapon wield,
And twirl it in his eye while sleep his huge strength
sealed.

THE ODYSSEY.

Then were four chosen—even the very same
Whom I myself should have picked out to be
My comrades in the work—and me they name
The fifth, their captain. In the evening he
Came, shepherding his flocks in due degree,
Home from the hills, and all his fleecy rout
Into the wide cave urged imperiously,
Nor left one loiterer in the space without,
Whether from God so minded, or his own dark doubt.

Soon with the great stone he blocked up the cave,
And milked the bleating flocks in order due,
And to each mother her young suckling gave.
But when the evening tasks were all gone through,
He of my wretched comrades seizing two
Straight on the horrible repast did sup.
Then I myself near to the Cyclops drew,
And, holding in my hands an ivy cup
Brimmed with the dark-red wine, took courage and
spake up:

[Ulysses Makes the Cyclops Drunk With the
Strong Black Wine of Maron, and Thrusts a
Burning Stake Into His Eye.](—WORSLEY.)

“Cyclops, take wine, and drink after thy meal
Consumed of human flesh, that thou mayst know
The kind of liquor wherein we sailors deal.
This a drink-offering have I brought, that so
Thou mightest pity me and let me go
Safe homeward. Thou alas! with fury extreme
Art raving, and thy fierceness doth outgrow
All bounds of reason. How then dost thou dream
Others will seek thy place, who dost so ruthless seem?”

He then received and drank and loudly cried
Rejoicing: “Give me, give me more, and tell

THE ODYSSEY.

Thy name, that some good boon I may provide,
True, the rich earth where the Cyclopes dwell,
Fed by the rain of Zeus, in wine doth well,—
But this is nectar, pure ambrosia's soul.”
So spake he. Thrice I gave the fatal spell;
Thrice in his foolishness he quaffed the whole.
Then said I, while his brain with the curling fumes did
roll:

“Cyclops, thou askest me my name renowned—
Now will I make it known; nor thou withhold
That boon whereto thy solemn troth is bound—
Hear then; my name is Noman. From of old
My father, mother, these my comrades bold,
Give me this title.” So I spake, and he
Answered at once with mind of ruthless mould:
“This shall fit largess unto Noman be—
Last, after all thy peers, I promise to eat thee.”

Therewith his head fell and he lay supine,
Tamed by the stroke of all-subduing sleep;
And the vast neck heaved, while rejected wine
And morsels of men's flesh in spasms did leap
Forth from his throat. Then did I rise, and deep
In the live embers hid the pointed stake,
Urging my comrades a good heart to keep.
Soon the green olive-wood the fire did bake;
Then all a-glow with sparkles I the red brand take.

Round me my comrades wait. The gods inbreathe
Fierce ardor. In his eye we thrust the brand,
I twirling from above and they beneath.
As when a shipwright at his work doth stand
Boring ship-timber, and on either hand
His fellows, kneeling at their toil below,
Whirl the swift auger with a leathern band

THE ODYSSEY.

For ever;—we the weapon keep whirling so,
While round the fiery point red blood doth bubbling
flow.

And from the burning eyeball the fierce steam
Singed all his brows, and the deep roots of sight
Crackled with fire. As when in the cold stream
Some smith the axe untempered, fiery-white,
Dips hissing; for thence comes the iron's might;
So did his eye hiss, and he roared again.
Loudly the vault rebellowed. We in flight
Rushed diverse. He the stake wrenched forth amain,
Soaked in the crimson gore, and hurled it mad with
pain;

Then, bursting forth into a mighty yell,
Called the Cyclopes, who in cave and lair
'Mid the deep glens and windy hill-tops dwell.
They, trooping to the shriek from far and near,
Ask from without what ails him: "In what fear
Or trouble, Polyphemus, dost thou cry
Through night ambrosial, and our slumbers scare?
Thee of thy flocks doth mortal violently
Despoil, or strive to kill by strength or treachery?"

And frenzied Polyphemus from the cave
This answer in his pain with shrieks out-threw:
"Never by strength, my friends, or courage brave!
Noman by treachery doth me subdue."
Whereto his fellows winged words renew:
"Good sooth! if no man work thee injury,
But in thy lone resort this sickness grew,
The hand of Zeus is not to be put by—
Go, then, in filial prayer to king Poseidon cry."

THE ODYSSEY.

[The Greeks, Clinging Beneath the Sheep, Escape
from the Blind Cyclops.](—(POPE.)

"Meantime the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round:
At last, the stone removing from the gate,
With hands extended in the midst he sate:
And search'd each passing sheep, and felt it o'er,
Secure to seize us e'er we reach'd the door
(Such as his shallow wit he deem'd was mine);
But secret I resolved the deep design:
'Twas for our lives my laboring bosom wrought;
Each scheme I turn'd, and sharpen'd every thought:
This way and that I cast to save my friends,
Till one resolve my varying counsel ends.

"Strong were the rams, with native purple fair,
Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care.
These, three and three, with osier bands we tied
(The twining bands the Cyclop's bed supplied;)
The midmost bore a man, the outward two
Secured each side; so bound we all the crew.
One ram remained, the leader of the flock:
In his deep fleece my grasping hands I lock,
And fast beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
There cling implicit, and confide in Jove.
When rosy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales,
He drove to pasture all the lusty males;
The ewes still folded, with distended thighs
Unmilk'd lay bleating in distressful cries.
But heedless of those cares, with anguish stung,
He felt their fleeces as they pass'd along
(Fool that he was), and let them safely go,
All unsuspecting of their freight below.

"The master ram at last approach'd the gate,
Charged with his wool, and with Ulysses' fate.
Him while he pass'd, the monster blind bespoke:

THE ODYSSEY.

'What makes my ram the lag of all the flock?
First thou wert wont to crop the flowery mead.
First to the field and river's bank to lead,
And first with stately step at evening hour
Thy fleecy fellows usher to their bower.
Now far the last, with pensive pace and slow
Thou movest, as conscious of thy master's woe!
Seest thou these lids that now unfold in vain?
(The deed of Noman and his wicked train!)
Oh! didst thou feel for thy afflicted lord,
And would but fate the power of speech afford,
Soon might'st thou tell me, where in secret here
The dastard lurks, all trembling with his fear:
Swung round and round, and dash'd from rock to rock,
His battered brains should on the pavement smoke.
No ease, no pleasure my sad heart receives,
While such a monster as vile Noman lives.'
"The giant spoke, and through the hollow rock
Dismiss'd the ram, the father of the flock.
No sooner freed, and through the inclosure pass'd,
First I release myself, my fellows last:
Fat sheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
And reach our vessel on the winding shore.
With joy the sailors view their friends return'd,
And hail us living whom as dead they mourn'd.
Big tears of transport stand in every eye;
I check their fondness, and command to fly.
Aboard in haste they heave the wealthy sheep,
And snatch their oars, and rush into the deep."

[Gaining the Ship, Ulysses Wrathfully Taunts the
Cyclop, Who, Blindly Hurling a Great Rock,
Nearly Destroys the Greeks.](—CHAPMAN.)

But having left as far the savage shores
As one might hear a voice, we then might see

THE ODYSSEY.

The Cyclop at the haven; when instantly
I stay'd our oars, and this insultance us'd:
"Cyclop! thou shouldst not have so much abus'd
Thy monstrous forces, to oppose their least
Against a man immortal, and a guest,
And eat his fellows. Thou mightst know there were
Some ills behind, rude swain, for thee to bear,
That fear'd not to devour thy guests, and break
All laws of humans. Jove sends therefore wreck,
And all the Gods, by me." This blew the more
His burning fury; when the top he tore
From off a huge rock, and so right a throw
Made at our ship, that just before the prow
It overflow and fell, miss'd mast and all
Exceeding little; but above the fall
So fierce a wave it rais'd, that back it bore
Our ship so far, it almost touch'd the shore.
A bead-hook then, a far-extended one,
I snatch'd up, thrust hard, and so set us gone
Some little way; and straight commanded all
To help me with their oars. * * *
* * * My heart was so great,
It would again provoke him, but my men
On all sides rush'd about me, to contain,
And said: "Unhappy! why will you provoke
A man so rude, that with so dead a stroke,
Giv'n with his rock-dart, made the sea thrust back
Our ship so far, and near hand forc'd our wrack?
Should he again but hear your voice resound,
And any words reach, thereby would be found
His dart's direction, which would, in his fall,
Crush piece-meal us, quite split our ship and all;
So much dart wields the monster." Thus urg'd they
Impossible things, in fear; but I gave way
To that wrath which so long I held deprest,
By great necessity conquer'd, in my breast:

THE ODYSSEY.

"Cyclop! if any ask thee, who impos'd
Th' unsightly blemish that thine eye enclos'd,
Say that Ulysses, old Laertes' son,
Whose seat is Ithaca, and who hath won
Surname of City-razer, bor'd it out."

[The Raging Cyclops Invokes His Father, Neptune, the God of Ocean, to Destroy Ulysses, and Neptune Thereafter Pursues Ulysses with Unceasing Hate.](—(POPE:)

"The astonished savage with a roar replies:
'O heavens! oh faith of ancient prophecies!
This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold
(The mighty seer who on these hills grew old;
Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare,
And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air);
Long since he menaced, such was Fate's command;
And named Ulysses as the destined hand.
I deem'd some godlike giant to behold,
Or lofty hero, haughty, brave, and bold;
Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean design,
Who, not by strength subdued me, but by wine.
But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray
Great Neptune's blessing on the watery way;
For his I am, and I the lineage own;
The immortal father no less boasts the son.
His power can heal me, and relight my eye;
And only his, of all the gods on high.'

"'Oh! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
From that vast bulk dislodge thy bloody mind,
And send thee howling to the realms of night!
As sure as Neptune cannot give thee sight.'

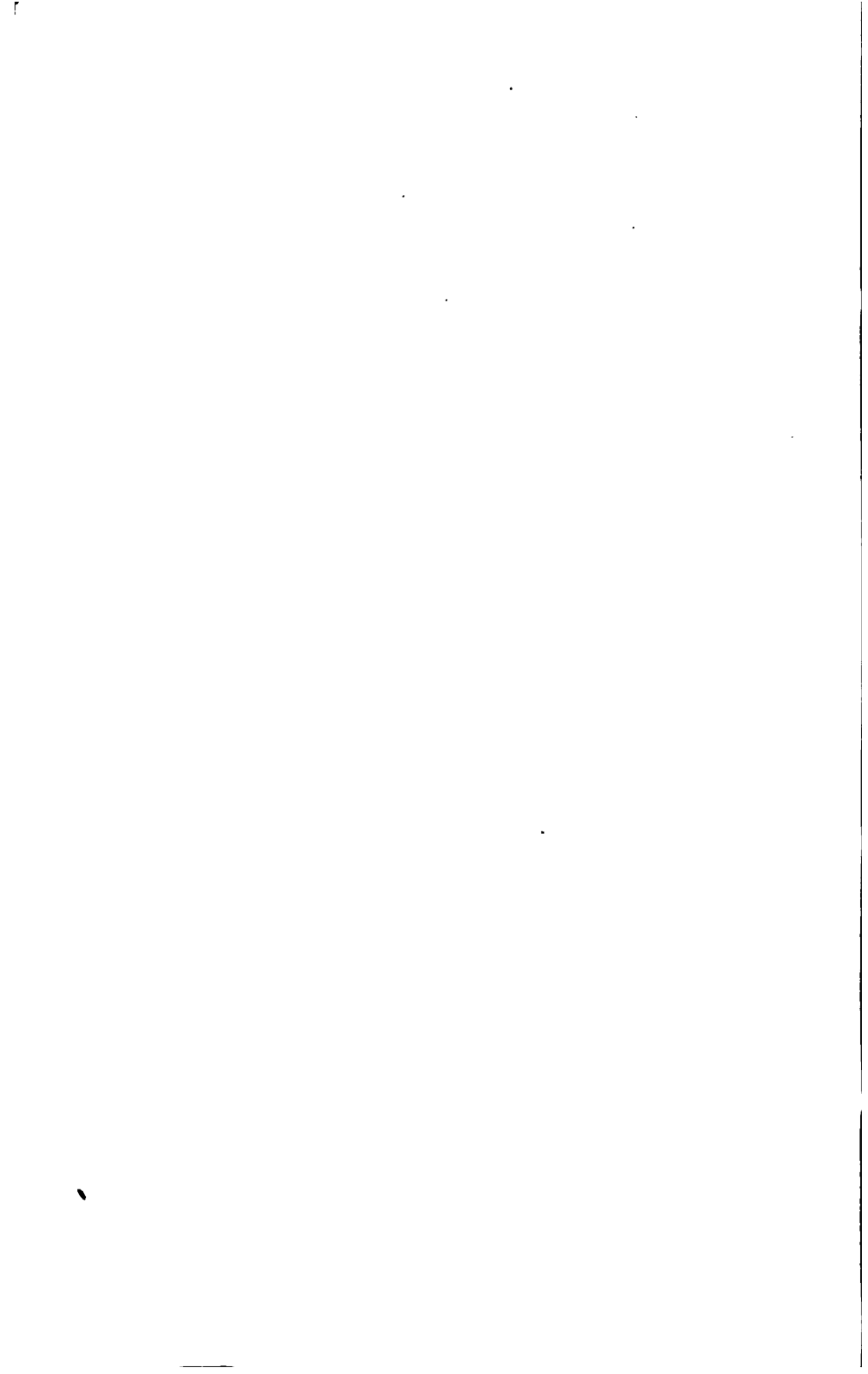
"Thus I; while raging he repeats his cries,
With hands uplifted to the starry skies!

THE ODYSSEY.

'Hear me, O Neptune; thou whose arms are hurl'd
From shore to shore, and gird the solid world;
If thine I am, nor thou my birth disown,
And if the unhappy Cyclop be thy son,
Let not Ulysses breathe his native air,
Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair.
If to review his country be his fate,
Be it through toils and sufferings long and late;
His lost companions let him first deplore;
Some vessel, not his own, transport him o'er;
And when at home from foreign sufferings freed,
More near and deep, domestic woes succeed'

"With imprecations thus he fill'd the air,
And angry Neptune heard the unrighteous prayer
A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
He whirl'd it round: it sung across the main;
It fell, and brush'd the stern: the billows roar,
Shake at the weight, and reflux beat the shore.
With all our force we kept aloof to sea,
And gained the island where our vessels lay.
Our sight the whole collected navy cheer'd,
Who, waiting long, by turns had hoped and fear'd.
There disembarking on the green sea side,
We land our cattle, and the spoil divide:
Of these due shares to every sailor fall;
The master ram was voted mine by all:
And him (the guardian of Ulysses' fate)
With pious mind to heaven I consecrate.
But the great god, whose thunder rends the skies,
Averse, beholds the smoking sacrifice;
And sees me wandering still from coast to coast,
And all my vessels, all my people, lost!

BOOK X



BOOK X: PART I

THE STORY

AFTER sailing awhile, they came to the island of Æolus, who is the king of the winds, and who dwelt there with his children, six sons and six daughters. Right well did Æolus entertain them, feasting them royally for a whole month, while he heard from Ulysses the story of all that had been done at Troy. And when Ulysses prayed him that he would help him on his way homewards, Æolus hearkened to him, and gave him the skin of an ox, in which he had bound all contrary winds, so that they should not hinder him. But he let a gentle west wind blow, that it might carry him and his comrades to their homes. For nine days it blew and now they were near to Ithaca, their country, so that they saw lights burning in it, it being night-time. But now, by an ill chance, Ulysses fell asleep, being wholly wearied out, for he had held the helm for nine days, nor trusted it to any of his comrades. And while he slept his comrades, who had cast eyes of envy on the great ox-hide, said one to another—

“Strange it is how men love and honor this Ulysses whithersoever he goes. And now he comes back from Troy with much spoil, but we with empty hands. Let us see what it is that Æolus hath given, for doubtless in this ox-hide is much silver and gold.”

So they loosed the great bag of ox-hide, and lo! all

THE ODYSSEY.

the winds rushed out, and carried them far away from their country. But Ulysses, waking with the tumult, doubted much whether he should not throw himself into the sea and so die. But he endured, thinking it better to live. Only he veiled his face and so sat, while the ships drave before the winds, till they came once more to the island of Æolus. Then Ulysses went to the palace of the king, and found him feasting with his wife and children, and sat him down on the threshold. Much did they wonder to see him, saying, "What evil power has hindered thee, that thou didst not reach thy country and home?"

Then he answered, "Blame not me, but the evil counsels of my comrades, and sleep, which mastered me to my hurt. But do ye help me again."

But they said, "Begone; we may not help him whom the gods hate; and hated of them thou surely art."

So Æolus sent him away. Then again they launched their ships and set forth, toiling wearily at the oars, and sad at heart.

Six days they rowed, nor rested at night, and on the seventh they came to Lamos, which was a city of the Læstrygons, in whose land the night is as the day, so that a man might earn double wage, if only he wanted not sleep—shepherd by day and herdsman by night. There was a fair haven with cliffs about it, and a narrow mouth with great rocks on either side. And within are no waves, but always calm.

Now Ulysses made fast his ship to the rocks, but the others entered the haven. Then he sent two men and a herald with them, and these came upon a smooth road by which wagons brought down wood from the mountain to the city. Here they met a maiden, the stalwart daughter of Antiphates, king of the land, and asked of her who was lord of that country. Whereupon she showed them her father's lofty palace. And they,

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entering this, saw the maiden's mother, big as a mountain, horrible to behold, who straightway called to Antiphates, her husband. The messengers, indeed, fled to the ships; but he made a great shout, and the Læstrygons came flocking about him, giants, not men. And these broke off great stones from the cliffs, each stone as much as a man could carry, and cast them at the ships, so that they were broken. And the men they speared, as if they were fishes, and devoured them. So it happened to all the ships in the haven. Ulysses only escaped, for he cut the hawser with his sword, and bade his men ply their oars, which indeed they did right willingly.

After a while they came to the island of *Ææa*, where *Circè* dwelt, who was the daughter of the Sun. Two days and nights they lay upon the shore in great trouble and sorrow. On the third, Ulysses took his spear and sword and climbed a hill that there was, for he wished to see to what manner of land they had come. And having climbed it, he saw the smoke rising from the palace of *Circè*, where it stood in the midst of a wood. Then he thought awhile: should he go straightway to the palace that he saw, or first return to his comrades on the shore? And this last seemed better; and it chanced that as he went he saw a great stag which was going down to the river to drink, for indeed the sun was now hot, and casting his spear at it he pierced it through. Then he fastened together the feet with green withes and a fathom's length of rope, and slinging the beast round his neck, so carried it to the ship, leaning on his spear; for indeed it was heavy to bear, nor could any man have carried it on the shoulder with one hand. And when he was come to the ship, he cast down his burden. Now the men were sitting with their faces muffled, so sad were they. But when he bade them be of good cheer, they looked up and

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marvelled at the great stag. And all that day they feasted on deer's flesh and sweet wine, and at night lay down to sleep on the shore. But when morning was come, Ulysses called them all together and spake—

"I know not, friends, where we are. Only I know, having seen smoke yesterday from the hill, that there is a dwelling in this island."

It troubled the men much to hear this, for they thought of the Cyclops and of the Læstrygons; and they wailed aloud, but there was no counsel in them. Wherefore Ulysses divided them into two companies, setting Eurylochus over the one and himself over the other, and shook lots in a helmet who should go and search out the island, and the lot of Eurylochus leapt out. So he went, and comrades twenty and two with him. And in an open space in the wood they found the palace of Circè. All about were wolves and lions; yet these harmed not the men, but stood up on their hind legs, fawning upon them, as dogs fawn upon their master when he comes from his meal. And the men were afraid. And they stood in the porch and heard the voice of Circè as she sang with a lovely voice and plied the loom. Then said Polites, who was dearest of all his comrades to Ulysses—

"Some one within plies a great loom, and sings with a loud voice. Some goddess is she, or woman. Let us make haste and call."

So they called to her, and she came out and beckoned to them that they should follow. So they went, in their folly. And she bade them sit, and mixed for them a mess, red wine, and in it barley-meal and cheese and honey, and mighty drugs withal, of which, if a man drank, he forgot all that he loved. And when they had drunk she smote them with her wand. And lo! they had of a sudden the heads and the voices and

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the bristles of swine, but the heart of a man was in them still. And Circè shut them in sties, and gave them mast and acorns and cornel to eat.

But Eurylochus fled back to the ship. And for a while, he could not speak, so full was his heart of grief, but at the last he told the tale of what had befallen. Then Ulysses took his silver-studded sword and his bow, and bade Eurylochus guide him by the way that he had gone.

Nor would he hearken when Eurylochus would have hindered him, but said, "Stay here by the ship, eating and drinking, if it be thy will, but I must go, for necessity constrains me."

And when he had come to the house, there met him Hermes of the golden wand, in the shape of a fair youth, who said to him:—

"Art thou come to rescue thy comrades that are now swine in Circè's house? Nay, but thou shalt never go back thyself. Yet, stay; I will give thee such a drug as shall give thee power to resist all her charms. For when she shall have mixed thee a mess, and smitten thee with her wand, then do thou rush upon her with thy sword making as if thou wouldst slay her. And when she shall pray for peace, do thou make her swear by the great oath that binds the gods that she will not harm thee."

Then Hermes showed Ulysses a certain herb, whose root was black, but the flower white as milk. "Moly," the gods call it, and very hard it is for mortal man to find. Then Ulysses went into the house and all befell as Hermes had told him. For Circè would have changed him as she had changed his comrades. Then he rushed at her with his sword, and made her swear the great oath which binds the gods that she would not harm him.

But afterwards, when they sat at meat together, the

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goddess perceived that he was silent and ate not. Wherefore she said, "Why dost thou sit, Ulysses, as though thou wert dumb? Fearest thou any craft of mine? Nay, but that may not be, for have I not sworn the great oath that binds the gods?"

And Ulysses said, "Nay, but who could think of meat and drink, when such things had befallen his companions?"

Then Circè led the way, holding her wand in her hand, and opened the doors of the sties, and drove out the swine that had been men. Then she rubbed on each another mighty drug, and the bristles fell from their bodies, and they became men, only younger and fairer than before. And when they saw Ulysses they clung to him and wept for joy, and Circè herself was moved with pity.

Then said she, "Go, Ulysses, to thy ship, and put away all the goods and tackling in the caves that are on the shore, but come again hither thyself and bring thy comrades with thee."

Then Ulysses went. Right glad were they who had stayed to see him, glad as are the calves who have been penned in the fold-yard when their mothers come back in the evening. And when he told them what had been, and would have them follow him, they were all willing, save only Eurylochus, who said—

"O ye fools, whither are we going? To the dwelling of Circè, who will change us all into swine, or wolves or lions, and keep us in prison, even as the Cyclops did! For was it not this same foolhardy Ulysses that lost our comrades there?"

Then was Ulysses very wroth, and would have slain Eurylochus, though near of kin to him. But his comrades hindered him, saying, "Let him abide here and keep the ship, if he will. But we will go with thee to the dwelling of Circè."

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Then Ulysses forebore. Nor did Eurylochus stay behind, but followed with the rest. So they went to the dwelling of Circè, who feasted them royally, so that they remained with her for a whole year, well content.

But when the year was out they said to Ulysses, "It were well to remember thy country, if it is indeed the will of the gods that thou shouldst return thither."

Then Ulysses besought Circè that she would send him on his way homewards, as indeed she had promised to do. And she answered—

"I would not have you abide in my house unwillingly. Yet must thou first go another journey, even to the dwellings of the dead, there to speak with the seer Tiresias."

But Ulysses was sore troubled to hear such things, and wept aloud, saying, "Who shall guide us in this journey?—for never yet did ship make such a voyage as this."

Then said Circè, "Seek no guide; only raise the mast of thy ship and spread the white sails, and sit in peace. So shall the north wind bear thee to the place on the ocean shore where are the groves of Persephoné, tall poplars and willows. There must thou beach thy ship. And after that thou must go alone."

Then she told him all that he must do if he would hold converse with the dead seer Tiresias, and hear what should befall him. So the next morning he roused his companions, telling them that they should now return. But it chanced that one of them, Elpenor by name, was sleeping on the roof, for the coolness, being heavy with wine. And when he heard the stir of his comrades, he rose up, nor thought of the ladder,

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but fell from the roof and brake his neck. And the rest being assembled, Ulysses told them how they must take another journey first, even to the dwellings of the dead. This they were much troubled to hear, yet they made ready the ship and departed.

BOOK X: PART II

THE POEM

[Æolus Gives Ulysses Control of the Winds, Confined in a Bag.](—(COWPER.)

WE came to the Æolian isle; there dwells
Æolus, son of Hippotas, beloved
By the Immortals, in an isle afloat. * * *
* * *

A month complete he, friendly, at his board
Regaled me, and enquiry made minute
Of Ilium's fall, of the Achaian fleet,
And of our voyage thence. I told him all.
But now, desirous to embark again,
I ask'd dismissal home, which he approved.
And well provided for my prosperous course.
He gave me, furnished by a bullock flay'd
In his ninth year, a bag; every rude blast
Which from its bottom turns the Deep, that bag
Imprison'd held; for him Saturnian Jove
Hath officed arbiter of all the winds,
To rouse their force, or calm them, at his will.
He gave me them on board my bark, so bound
With silver twine that not a breath escaped,
Then order'd gentle Zephyrus to fill
Our sails propitious. Order vain, alas!
So fatal proved the folly of my friends.

THE ODYSSEY.

Nine days continual, night and day we sail'd,
And on the tenth my native land appear'd.
Not far remote my Ithacans I saw
Fires kindling on the coast; but me with toil
Worn, and with watching, gentle sleep subdued;
For constant I had ruled the helm, nor given
That charge to any, fearful of delay.
Then, in close conference combined, my crew
Each other thus bespake—He carries home
Silver and gold from Æolus received,
Offspring of Hippotas, illustrious Chief;
And thus a mariner the rest harangued.
“Ye Gods! what city or what land soe'er
Ulysses visits, how he is beloved
By all, and honor'd! many precious spoils
He homeward bears from Troy; but we return,
(We who the self-same voyage have perform'd,
With empty hands. Now also he hath gain'd
This pledge of friendship from the King of winds.
But come—be quick—search we the bag and learn
What stores of gold and silver it contains.”

[The Imprisoned Winds Are Released by the
Crew, and the Ships Are Driven Far Away.]
—(WORSLEY.)

Thus, their ill thought prevailing, they untied
The skin—whom straight the battling tempests bore
Far from their country o'er the ocean wide,
Weeping. Half-stunned with the tumultuous roar
I, scared from slumber, sat debating sore
Whether to die beneath the rolling heap
Of waters, or bear life a little more.
Soon to a dark lair muffled-mute I creep,
And brood there, while the barks drive headlong
through the deep.

THE ODYSSEY.

Back to Æolia groaning we descend,
There disembark, draw water, drink and eat.
Soon with the herald and one else I wend
On toward the house, the king of winds to greet.
Him with his wife and children couched at meat
We found within his halls magnificent.
There entering, on the ground we take our seat
Hard by the doors, as from some dire event.
Then all with one accord spake, wondering what it
meant.

"Whence comest thou, Odysseus? what bad fate
Lays hold upon thee? Surely, with due care,
Armed with each means, we sent thee hence of late,
To fatherland and home, and wheresoe'er
Thy mind incline thee through the seas to fare."
I grieving: "Faithless friends my doom have wrought
And sleep pernicious. O the loss repair,
For ye are able!" Wrapt in silent thought
Paused they awhile, till he, the sire, this answer
brought:

"Out and avaunt, thou worst of souls alive!
How can I cherish, or dismiss with love,
One whom the blessed gods will not let thrive?
Hence! Thou art hated by the powers above!"
So did he make me from his halls remove
Deep-groaning; and thenceforward on our way
In sorrow through the briny seas we drove.
Then did the men's hearts fail them night and day,
Tired with the grievous oar, while guideless far we
stray.

THE ODYSSEY.

[All the Galleys But That of Ulysses Are Destroyed by the Læstrygonians.](CHAP-MAN.)

"Six nights and days

We sail'd; the seventh we saw fair Lamos raise
Her lofty tow'rs, the Læstrygonian state.

* * * But when the haven we found,
(Exceeding famous, and environ'd round
With one continue rock, which so much bent
That both ends almost met, so prominent
They were, and made the haven's mouth passing strait)
Our whole fleet in we got; in whose receipt
Our ships lay anchor'd close. Nor needed we
Fear harm on any stays, Tranquility
So purely sat there, that waves great nor small
Did ever rise to any height at all.

And yet would I no entry make, but stay'd
Alone without the haven, and thence survey'd,
From out a lofty watch-tow'r rais'd there,
The country round about; nor anywhere
The work of man or beast appear'd to me,
Only a smoke from earth break I might see.
I then made choice of two, and added more,
A herald for associate, to explore
What sort of men liv'd there. They went, and saw
A beaten way, through which carts us'd to draw
Wood from the high hills to the town, and met
A maid without the port, about to get
Some near spring-water. She the daughter was
Of mighty Læstrygonian Antiphas,
And to the clear spring call'd Artacia went,
To which the whole town for their water sent.
To her they came, and ask'd who govern'd there,
And what the people whom he order'd were?
She answer'd not, but led them through the port,

THE ODYSSEY.

As making haste to show her father's court.
Where enter'd, they beheld, to their affright,
A woman like a mountain-top in height,
Who rushed abroad, and from the council-place
Call'd home her horrid husband Antiphas.
Who, deadly-minded, straight he snatch'd up one,
And fell to supper. Both the rest were gone;
And to the fleet came. Antiphas a cry
Drave through the city; which heard, instantly
This way and that innumerable sorts,
Not men, but giants, issued through the ports,
And mighty flints from rocks tore, which they threw
Amongst our ships; through which an ill noise flew
Of shiver'd ships, and life-expiring men,
That were, like fishes, by the monsters slain,
And borne to sad feast. While they slaughter'd these,
That were engaged in all th' advantages
The close-mouth'd and most dead-calm haven could
give,
I, that without lay, made some means to live,
My sword drew, cut my cables, and to oars
Set all my men; and, from the plagues those shores
Let fly amongst us, we made haste to fly,
My men close working as men loth to die.
My ship flew freely off; but theirs that lay
On heaps in harbors could enforce no way
Through these stern fates that had engag'd them there.
Forth our sad remnant sail'd, yet still retain'd
The joys of men, that our poor few remain'd."

[Landing on Circè's Isle, the Wanderers Draw
Near to Her Palace, Guarded by Fawning
Wild Beasts.](—(COWPER.)

We came to the Ææan isle; there dwelt
The awful Circè, Goddess amber-hair'd,

THE ODYSSEY.

Deep skill'd in magic song. * * *
Our vessel there, noiseless, we push'd to land
Within a spacious haven, thither led
By some celestial Power. We disembark'd,
And on the coast two days and nights entire
Extended lay, worn with long toil, and each
The victim of his heart-devouring woes.
Then with my spear, and with my falchion arm'd.
I left the ship to climb with hasty steps
An airy height, thence hoping to espy
Some works of man, or hear, perchance, a voice.
Exalted on a rough rock's craggy point
I stood, and on the distant plain, beheld
Smoke which from Circè's palace through the gloom
Of trees and thickets rose. That smoke discern'd,
I ponder'd next if thither I should haste,
Seeking intelligence. Long time I mused,
But chose at last, as my discreeter course,
To seek the sea-beach and my bark again,
And, when my crew had eaten, to dispatch
Before me others, who should first enquire.

Then, * numbering * man by man, * I parted * them
In equal portions, and assign'd a Chief
To either band, myself to these, to those
Godlike Eurylochus. This done, we cast
The lots into the helmet, and at once
Forth sprang the lot of bold Eurylochus.
He went, and with him of my people march'd
Twenty-and-two, all weeping; nor ourselves
Wept less, at separation from our friends.
Low in a vale, but on an open spot,
They found the splendid house of Circè, built
With hewn and polish'd stones; compass'd she dwelt
By lions on all sides and mountain-wolves
Tamed by herself with drugs of noxious powers.

THE ODYSSEY.

Nor were they mischievous, but as my friends
Approach'd, arising on their hinder feet,
Paw'd them in blandishment, and wagg'd the tail.
As, when from feast he rises, dogs around
Their master fawn, accustom'd to receive
The sop conciliatory from his hand,
Around my people, so, those talon'd wolves
And lions fawn'd. They, terrified, that troop
Of savage monsters horrible beheld.

[Charmed by the Sweet Singing of the Enchantress, the Greeks Fall Victims to Her Sorceries and Are Transformed to Swine.](—(WORSLEY.)

Soon at her vestibule they pause, and hear
A voice of singing from a lovely place,
Where Circè weaves her great web year by year,
So shining, slender, and instinct with grace,
As weave the daughters of immortal race.
Then said Polites, nearest, first in worth
Of all my friends: "Hark! through the echoing space
Floats a sweet music charming air and earth!
Call! for some goddess bright or woman gave it birth."

Thus spake he, and they lifted up their voice
And called her. She the brilliant doors anon
Unfolding bade them in her halls rejoice;
Who entered in not knowing, save alone
Eurylochus, misdoubting fraud. Full soon
Benches and chairs in fair array she set,
And mixing meal and honey, poured thereon
Strong Pramnian wine, and with the food they ate
Beat up her baleful drugs, to make them quite forget

Their country. They receiving drank, unwise.
Forthwith she smote them with her wand divine,

THE ODYSSEY.

And drove them out, and shut them close in styes,
Where they the head, voice, form, and hair of swine
Took, but the heart stayed sane, as ere the wine
Confused them; they thus to their lairs retreat;
She food, whereon the brutish herd might dine,
Furnished, mast, acorns, their familiar meat,
Such as earth-groveling swine are ever wont to eat.

Then sought Eurylochus the swift black ship,
The bitter fortune of his friends to tell;
Nor, when he came there, could he stir a lip,
Nor the thing show that in his soul did swell.
Tongueless he stood, heart-wounded, weak to quell
The agony within; a dark dumb rain
Of weeping ever from his eyelids fell;
Much did we wonder and inquire his pain,
Till words at last he found his anguish to make plain.

[Hermes Gives Ulysses a Charm to Resist the
Enchantments of Circè.]—(BRYANT.)

* * * I slung my silver-studded sword
Upon my shoulders,—a huge blade of brass,—
And my bow with it, * * * and went up
Into the isle; and when I found myself
Within that awful valley, and not far
From the great palace in which Circè dwelt,
The sorceress, there met me on my way
A youth; he seemed in manhood's early prime,
When youth has most of grace. He took my hand
And held it, and, accosting me, began:—

“Rash mortal! whither art thou wandering thus
Alone among the hills, where every place
Is strange to thee? Thy comrades are shut up
In Circè's palace in close cells like swine.

THE ODYSSEY.

Com'st thou to set them free? Nay, thou like them
Wilt rather find thyself constrained to stay.
Let me bestow the means to make thee safe
Against that mischief. Take this potent herb,
And bear it with thee to the palace-halls
Of Circè, and it shall avert from thee
The threatened evil. I will now reveal
The treacherous arts of Circè. She will bring
A mingled draught to thee, and drug the bowl,
But will not harm thee thus; the virtuous plant
I gave thee will prevent it. Hear yet more:
When she shall smite thee with her wand, draw forth
Thy good sword from thy thigh and rush at her
As if to take her life, and she will crouch
In fear, and will solicit thine embrace.
Refuse her not, that so she may release
Thy comrades, and may send thee also back
To thine own land; but first exact of her
The solemn oath which binds the blessed gods,
That she will meditate no other harm
To thee, nor strip thee of thy manly strength.'

"The Argus-queller spake, and plucked from earth
The potent plant and handed it to me,
And taught me all its powers. The root is black,
The blossom white as milk. Among the gods
Its name is Moly; hard it is for men
To dig it up; the gods find nothing hard.

"Back through the woody island Hermes went
Toward high Olympus, while I took my way
To Circè's halls, yet with a beating heart.
There, as I stood beneath the portico
Of that bright-haired divinity, I called
Aloud; the goddess heard my voice and came,
And threw at once the shining doors apart,

THE ODYSSEY.

And prayed me to come in. I followed her,
Yet grieving still. She led me in and gave
A seat upon a silver-studded throne,
Beautiful, nobly wrought, and placed beneath
A footstool, and prepared a mingled draught
Within a golden chalice, and infused
A drug with mischievous intent. She gave
The cup; I drank it off; the charm wrought not,
And then she smote me with her wand and said:—
'Go to the sty, and with thy fellows sprawl!'

"She spake; but drawing forth the trusty sword
Upon my thigh, I rushed at her as if
To take her life. She shrieked and, stooping low,
Ran underneath my arm and clasped my knees,
And uttered piteously these winged words:—

[Overcome by Ulysses, Circè Restores His Com-
rades to Human Form.]—(POPE.)

" 'What art thou? say! from whence, from whom you
came?

O more than human! tell thy race, thy name.
Amazing strength, these poisons to sustain!
Not mortal thou, nor mortal is thy brain.
Or art thou he, the man to come (foretold
By Hermes, powerful, with the wand of gold),
The man from Troy, who wander'd ocean round;
The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Ulysses? Oh! thy threatening fury cease,
Sheathe thy bright sword, and join our hands in peace!

" 'And now, dread Circè! (furious I rejoin)
Can love, and love-born confidence, be mine,
Beneath thy charms when my companions groan

THE ODYSSEY.

Transform'd to beasts, with accents not their own?
O thou of fraudulent heart, shall I be led
To share thy feast-rites, or ascend thy bed;
That, all unarm'd, thy vengeance may have vent,
And magic bind me, cold and impotent?
Celestial as thou art, yet stand denied;
Or swear that oath by which the gods are tied,
Swear, in thy soul no latent frauds remain,
Swear by the vow which never can be vain.~

* * *

The table in fair order spread,
They heap the glittering canisters with bread:
Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
Of choicest sort and savor, rich repast!
Circè in vain invites the least to share;
Absent I ponder, and absorb'd in care;
While scenes of woe rose anxious in my breast,
The queen beheld me, and these words address'd:

"Why sits Ulysses silent and apart,
Some hoard of grief close harbor'd at his heart?
Untouched before thee stand the cates divine,
And unregarded laughs the rosy wine.
Can yet a doubt or any dread remain,
When sworn that oath which never can be vain?"

"I answered: 'Goddess! human is my breast,
By justice sway'd, by tender pity press'd;
Ill fits it me, whose friends are sunk to beasts,
To quaff thy bowls, or riot in thy feasts.
Me would'st thou please? for them thy cares employ,
And them to me restore, and me to joy.'

"With that she parted; in her potent hand
She bore the virtue of the magic wand.
Then, hastening to the styes, set wide the door,

THE ODYSSEY.

Urged forth, and drove the bristly herd before;
Unwieldy, out they rushed with general cry,
Enormous beasts, dishonest to the eye.
Now touch'd by counter-charms they change again,
And stand majestic, and recall'd to men.
Those hairs of late that bristled every part,
Fall off, miraculous effect of art!
Till all the form in full proportion rise,
More young, more large, more graceful to my eyes.
They saw, they knew me, and with eager pace
Clung to their master in a long embrace:
Sad, pleasing sight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
And sobs of joy re-echoed through the bower;
E'en Circè wept, her adamant heart
Felt pity enter, and sustain'd her part.

[Ulysses Is Bidden by Circè to Seek the Abode of
Pluto for Guidance.](—(BRYANT.)

"I to Circè's sumptuous couch went up,
A suppliant at her knees. The goddess heard
My prayer, as thus in winged words I said:—

"O Circè! make, I pray, the promise good
Which thou hast given, to send me to my home.
My heart is pining for it, and the hearts
Of all my friends, who weary out my life
Lamenting round me when thou art not nigh."

"I spake; the mighty goddess thus replied:—
'Son of Laërtes, nobly born and wise,
Ulysses! ye must not remain with me
Unwillingly; but ye have yet to make
Another voyage, and must visit first
The abode of Pluto, and of Proserpine
His dreaded queen, and there consult the soul
Of the blind seer Tiresias,—him of Thebes,—

THE ODYSSEY.

Whose intellect was spared; for Proserpine
Gave back to him in death the power of mind,
That only he might know of things to come.
The rest are shades that flit from place to place.'

"Thus spake the goddess; and my heart was wrung
With sorrow. * * * But when my grief,
With shedding tears and tossing where I sat,
Was somewhat spent, I spake to Circè thus:—

"'O Circè, who will guide me when I make
This voyage? for no galley built by man
Has ever yet arrived at Pluto's realm.'

[Circè Describes to Ulysses the Gloomy Path to
Hell.]—(POPE.)

"'Thy fated road' (the magic power replied),
'Divine Ulysses! asks no mortal guide.
Rear but the mast, the spacious sail display,
The northern winds shall wing thee on thy way.
Soon shalt thou reach old Ocean's utmost ends,
Where to the main the shelving shore descends;
The barren trees of Proserpine's black woods,
Poplars and willows trembling o'er the floods:
There fix thy vessel in the lonely bay,
And enter there the kingdoms void of day:
Where the Phlegethon's loud torrents, rushing down,
Hiss in the flaming gulf of Acheron;
And where, slow rolling from the Stygian bed,
Cocytus' lamentable waters spread:
Where the dark rock o'erhangs the infernal lake,
And mingling streams eternal murmurs make.

"'First draw thy falchion, and on every side
Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide:
To all the shades around libations pour,
And o'er the ingredients strew the hallow'd flour:

THE ODYSSEY.

New wine and milk, with honey temper'd bring,
And living water from the crystal spring.
Then the wan shades and feeble ghosts implore,
With promised offerings on thy native shore;
A barren cow, the stateliest of the isle,
And heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pile:
These to the rest; but to the seer must bleed
A sable ram, the pride of all thy breed.
These solemn vows and holy offerings paid
To all the phantom nations of the dead,
Be next thy care the sable sheep to place
Full o'er the pit, and hellward turn their face:
But from the infernal rite thine eye withdraw,
And back to Ocean glance with reverend awe.
Sudden shall skim along the dusky glades
Thin airy shoals, and visionary shades.

"Then give command the sacrifice to haste,
Let the flay'd victims in the flame be cast,
And sacred vows and mystic song applied
To grisly Pluto and his gloomy bride.
Wide o'er the pool thy falchion waved around
Shall drive the spectres from forbidden ground.
The sacred draught shall all the dead forbear,
Till awful from the shades arise the seer.
Let him, oraculous, the end, the way,
The turns of all thy future fate display,
Thy pilgrimage to come, and remnant of thy day.'"

BOOK XI

BOOK XI: PART I

THE STORY

SO they came to the place of which Circè had told them. And when all things had been rightly done, Ulysses saw spirits of the dead. First of all came Elpenor, and he marvelled much to see him, saying—

“How camest thou hither?—on foot, or in the ship?”

Then he answered, telling how he had died, and he said, “Now as thou wilt go back, I know, to the island of Circè, suffer me not to remain unburied, but make above me a mound of earth, for men in aftertimes to see, and put upon it my oar, with which I was wont to row while I yet lived.”

These things Ulysses promised that he would do. Afterwards came the spirit of Tiresias, holding a sceptre of gold in his hand. And when Ulysses asked him of his return, he said,—

“Thy return shall be difficult, because of the anger of Poseidon, whose son thou madest blind. Yet, when thou comest to the island of the Three Capes, where feed the oxen of the Sun, if thou leave these unhurt, thou and thy comrades shall return to Ithaca. But otherwise they shall perish, and thou shalt return, after long time, in a ship not thine own, and shalt find in thy palace, devouring thy goods, men of violence, suitors of thy wife. These shalt thou slay, openly or by craft. Nor yet shalt thou rest, but shalt go to a land where men know not the sea, nor eat their meat

THE ODYSSEY.

with salt; and thou shalt carry thy oar on thy shoulder. And this shall be a sign to thee, when another wayfarer, meeting thee, shall ask whether it be a winnowing fan that thou bearest on thy shoulder; then shalt thou fix thy oar in the earth, and make a sacrifice to Poseidon, and so return. So shalt thou die at last in peace."

Then Tiresias departed. After this he saw his mother, and asked how it fared with his home in Ithaca, and she told him all. And many others he saw, wives and daughters of the heroes of old time. Also there came King Agamemnon, who told him how Ægisthus, with Clytemnestra, his wicked wife, had slain him in his own palace, being newly returned from Troy. Fain would the king have heard how it fared with Orestes, his son, but of this Ulysses could tell him nothing. Then came the spirit of Achilles, and him Ulysses comforted, telling him how bravely and wisely his son Neoptolemus had borne himself in Troy.

Also he saw the spirit of Ajax, son of Telamon; but Ajax spake not to him, having great wrath in his heart, because of the arms of Achilles. For the two, Ajax and Ulysses, had contended for them, Achilles being dead, before the assembly of the Greeks, and the Greeks had given them to Ulysses, whereupon Ajax, being very wroth, had laid hands upon himself.

And having seen many other things, Ulysses went back to his ship, and returned with his companions to the island of Circè.

BOOK XI: PART II

THE POEM

[Ulysses, After Passing the Land of Darkness,
Makes Sacrifice to the Infernal Gods, and
Gibbering Ghosts Throng Round Him.]—
(POPE.)

NOW to the shores we bend, a mournful train,
Climb the tall bark, and launch into the main:
At once the mast we rear, at once unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind:
Then pale and pensive stand, with cares oppress'd,
And solemn horror saddens every breast.
A freshening breeze and magic power supplied,
While the wing'd vessel flew along the tide;
Our oars we shipp'd: all day the swelling sails
Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales.
"Now sunk the sun from his ærial height,
When lo! we reach'd old Ocean's utmost bounds,
Where rocks control his waves with ever-during
mounds.

"There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells,
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells;
The sun ne'er views the uncomfortable seats,
When radiant he advances, or retreats:
Unhappy race! whom endless night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in shades.

THE ODYSSEY.

"The ship we moor on these obscure abodes;
Disbark the sheep, and offering to the gods;
And, hellward bending, o'er the beach descry
The doleful passage to the infernal sky.
The victims, vow'd to each Tartarian power,
Eurylochus and Perimedes bore.

"Here open'd hell, and hell I here implored,
And from the scabbard drew the shining sword:
And trenching the black earth on every side,
A cavern form'd, a cubit long and wide.
New wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
Then living waters from the crystal spring:
O'er these was strew'd the consecrated flour,
And on the surface shone the holy store.

"Now the wan shades we hail, the infernal gods,
To speed our course, and waft us o'er the floods:
So shall a barren heifer from the stall
Beneath the knife upon your altars fall;
So in our palace, at our safe return,
Rich with unnumber'd gifts the pile shall burn;
So shall a ram, the largest of the breed,
Black as these regions, to Tiresias bleed.

"Thus solemn rites and holy vows we paid
To all the phantom-nations of the dead;
Then died the sheep: a purple torrent flow'd,
And all the caverns smoked with streaming blood.
When lo! appear'd along the dusky coasts,
Thin, airy shoals of visionary ghosts:
Fair, pensive youths, and soft enamor'd maids;
And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled shades;
Ghastly with wounds the forms of warriors slain
Stalk'd with majestic port, a martial train:
These and a thousand more swarm'd o'er the ground,
And all the dire assembly shriek'd around.
Astonish'd at the sight, aghast I stood,
And a cold fear ran shivering through my blood;

THE ODYSSEY.

Straight I command the sacrifice to haste,
Straight the flay'd victims to the flames are cast
And mutter'd vows, and mystic song applied
To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.

"Now swift I waved my falchion o'er the blood;
Back started the pale throngs, and trembling stood.
Round the black trench the gore untasted flows,
Till awful from the shades Tiresias rose."

[Tiresias the Seer Warns Ulysses of Neptune's
Wrath, and that Destruction Will Follow
Harm to the Oxen of the Sun.](—(BRYANT.)

* * * "He too came, the Theban seer,
Tiresias, bearing in his hand a wand
Of gold; he knew me and bespake me thus:—

" 'Why, O unhappy mortal, hast thou left
The light of day to come among the dead
And to this joyless land? Go from the trench
And turn thy sword away, that I may drink
The blood, and speak the word of prophecy.'

"He spake; withdrawing from the trench, I thrust
Into its sheath my silver-studded sword,
And after drinking of the dark red blood
The blameless prophet turned to me and said:—

" 'Illustrious chief Ulysses, thy desire
Is for a happy passage to thy home,
Yet will a god withstand thee. Not unmarked
By Neptune shalt thou, as I deem, proceed
Upon thy voyage. He hath laid up wrath
Against thee in his heart, for that thy hand
Deprived his son of sight. Yet may ye still
Return, though after many hardships borne,
If thou but hold thy appetite in check,
And that of thy companions, when thou bring
Thy gallant bark to the Trinacrian isle,

THE ODYSSEY.

Safe from the gloomy deep. There will ye find
The beeves and fatling wethers of the Sun,—
The all-beholding and all-hearing Sun.
If these ye leave unharmed, and keep in mind
The thought of your return, ye may go back,
Though sufferers, to your home in Ithaca;
But if thou do them harm, the event will be
Destruction to thy ship and to its crew;
And thou, if thou escape it, wilt return
Late to thy country, all thy comrades lost,
And in a foreign bark, and thou shalt find
Wrong in thy household,—arrogant men who waste
Thy substance, wooers of thy noble wife,
And offering bridal gifts. On thy return
Thou shalt avenge thee of their violent deeds;
And when thou shalt have slain them in thy halls,
Whether by stratagem or by the sword
In open fight, then take a shapely oar
And journey on, until thou meet with men
Who have not known the sea nor eaten food
Seasoned with salt, nor ever have beheld
Galleys with crimson prows, nor shapely oars,
Which are the wings of ships. I will declare
A sign by which to know them, nor canst thou
Mistake it. When a traveller, meeting thee,
Shalt say that thou dost bear a winnowing-fan
Upon thy shoulder, stop and plant
Thy shapely oar upright in earth, and there
Pay to King Neptune solemn sacrifice,—
A ram, a bull, and from his herd of swine
A boar. And then returning to thy home,
See that thou offer hallowed hecatombs
To all the ever-living ones who dwell
In the broad heaven, to each in order due.
So at the last thy death shall come to thee
Far from the sea, and gently take thee off

THE ODYSSEY.

In a serene old age that ends among
A happy people. I have told thee true.'

* * * *

"The soul of King Tiresias, saying this,
Passed to the abode of Pluto; he had given
The oracle I asked."

(A Throng of Spirits Flock to Drink the Blood
of Sacrifice. Among Them Is Anticlea, the
Mother of Ulysses, With Whom the Hero
Holds Mournful Converse; and Many Noble
Dames, Mothers and Wives of Heroes. Then
Come the Souls of the Achaian Chiefs Slain
in the War With Troy or After—the Com-
rades of Ulysses, Agamemnon, Achilles, Pat-
roclus, Antilochus and Ajax, Who Tell the
Stories of Their Fate or Learn of Living
Friends.)

[Passing Further Into Hell, Ulysses Views the
Torments of Lost Souls, Damned to Eternal
Punishment for Great Crimes.](—(WORS-
LEY.)

* * * Within my breast more strong desire
Impelled me, passing from the pool's dark brim
Into the deeper regions to retire,
And view the other souls, and of their state inquire.

There Minos, child of Zeus, sceptred with gold,
I saw dividing justice to the dead,
Who round his throne in the wide-gated hold
Of Hades stand or sit, and him, their head,
Cry to, for judgment: next, Orion dread,
Still hunting through the plains of asphodel
Shades of the creatures wild, whose life he shed

THE ODYSSEY.

Under the sun in lonely mount or dell,
Wielding his iron club, for aye unbreakable.

There also Tityus, of glorious Earth
The offspring, I saw stretched upon the plain.
His wondrous stature and gigantic girth
Nine roods extended. Ever vultures twain
Slash from each side his liver, and with fierce pain
Their probing beaks within his entrails hide,
While he to scare them waves wild hands in vain.

* * * *

There also Tantalus in anguish stood,
Plunged in the stream of a translucent lake;
And to his chin welled ever the cold flood.
But when he rushed, in fierce desire to break
His torment, not one drop could he partake.
For as the old man stooping seems to meet
That water with his fiery lips, and slake
The frenzy of wild thirst, around his feet,
Leaving the dark earth dry, the shuddering waves re-
treat.

Also the thick-leaved arches overhead
Fruit of all savour in profusion flung,
And in his clasp rich clusters seem to shed.
Their citrons waved, with shining fruitage hung,
Pears and pomegranates, olive ever young
And the sweet-mellowing fig: but whenso'er
The old man, fain to cool his burning tongue,
Clutched with his fingers at the branches fair,
Came a strong wind and whirled them skyward through
the air.

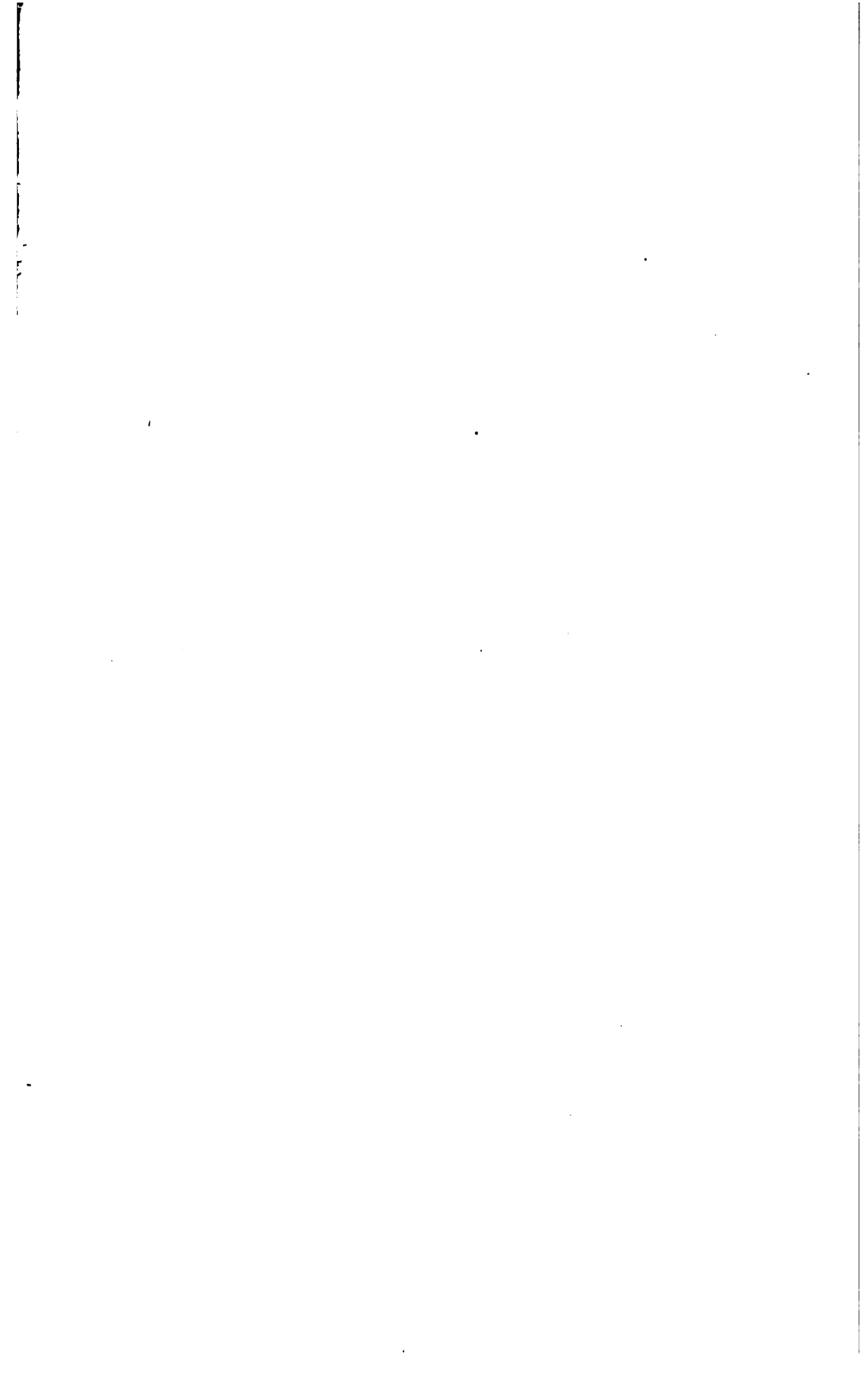
And I saw Sisyphus in travail strong
Shove with both hands a mighty sphere of stone.

THE ODYSSEY.

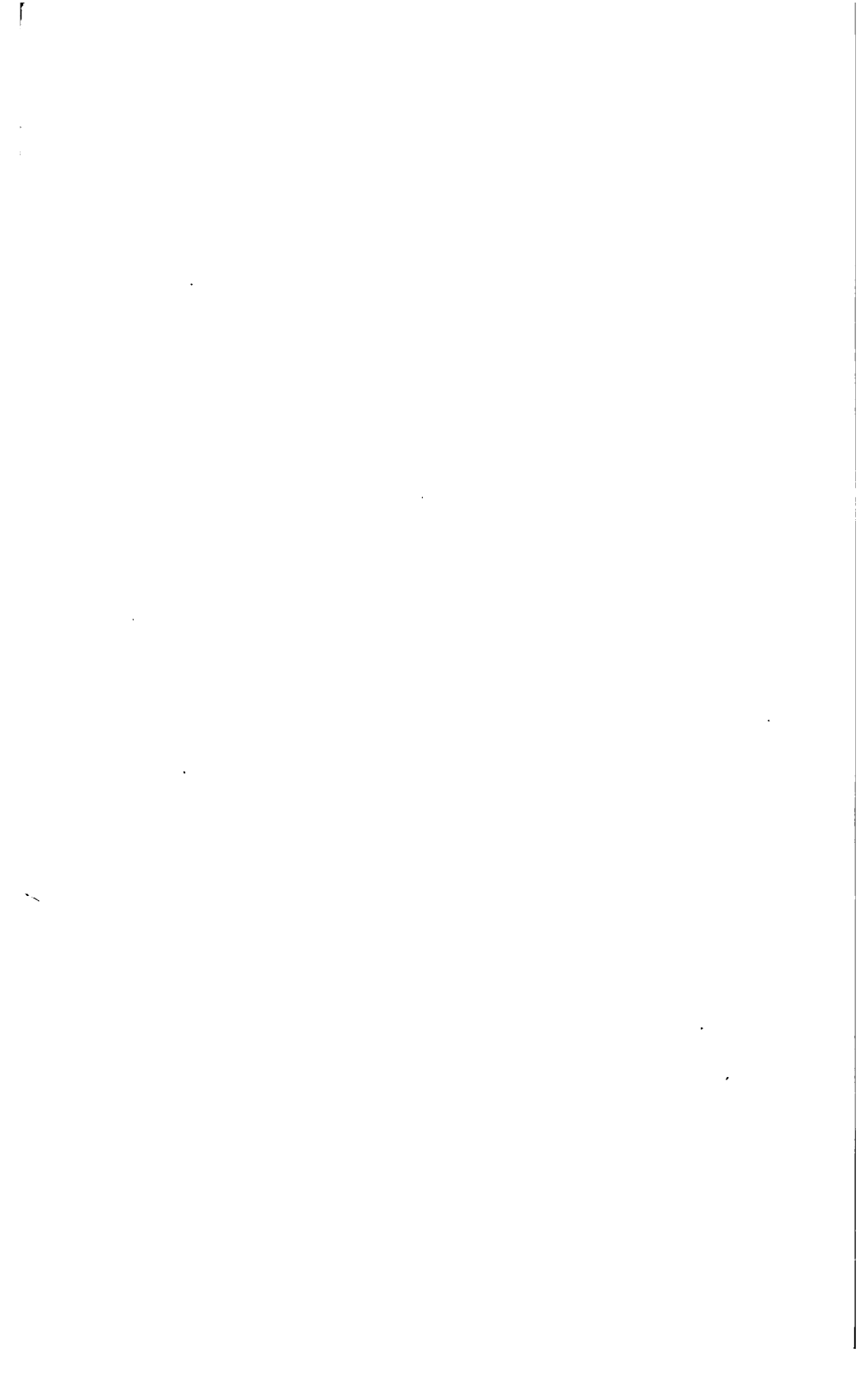
With feet and sinewy wrists he laboring long
Just pushed the vast globe up, with many a groan;
But when he thought the huge mass to have thrown
Clean o'er the summit, the enormous weight
Back to the nether plain rolled tumbling down.
He, straining, the great toil resumed, while sweat
Bathed each laborious limb, and the brows smoked
with heat.

* * * I lingering stood my ground
To watch if any other his dark steps bent
Thither—some hero of the names renowned
Who died in the old time. Then had I found
Whomso I wished, Pirithous, Theseus dread,
Children of gods; but with portentous sound
Ev'n then the thousand thousands of the dead
Flocked thickening, and pale fear possessed me, and
I fled;

Fled, for strange terror did my heart embrace,
Lest chance from Hades high Persephone
Should to my bale send forth the monstrous face
Of the dire Gorgon. To the bark I flee,
And bid my valiant comrades speedily
Loose the stern-cables, and the benches man;
Who, straight obedient, toward the outer sea
Down Ocean's rolling river their course began.
Thus holpen, first with oars, then wind, the swift ship
ran.



BOOK XII



BOOK XII: PART I

THE STORY

HAVING returned to Circè's isle, first they buried Elpenor, making a mound over him, and setting up on it his oar, and afterwards Circè made them a feast. But while the others slept she told to Ulysses all that should befall him, saying—

“First thou wilt come to the island of the Sirens, who sing so sweetly, that whosoever hears them straightway forgets wife and child and home. In a meadow they sit, singing sweetly, but about them are bones of men. Do thou, then, close with wax the ears of thy companions, and make them bind thee to the mast, so that thou mayest hear the song and yet take no hurt. And do thou bid them, when thou shalt pray to be loosed, not to hearken, but rather to bind thee the more. And this peril being past, there lie others in thy path, of which thou must take thy choice. For either thou must pass between the rocks which the gods call the Wanderers—and these close upon all that passes between them, even the very doves in their flight, nor has any ship escaped them, save only the ship *Argo*, which *Heré* loved—or thou must go through the strait, where there is a rock on either hand. In the one rock dwells *Scylla*, in a cave so high above the sea that an archer could not reach it with his arrow. A horrible monster is she. Twelve unshapely feet she hath, and six long necks, and on each

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a head with three rows of teeth. In the cave she lies, but her heads are without, fishing for sea-dogs and dolphins, or even a great whale, if such should chance to go by. Think not to escape her, Ulysses, for, of a truth, with each head will she take one of thy companions. But the other rock is lower and more flat, with a wild fig-tree on the top. There Charybdis thrice a day draws in the dark water, and thrice a day sends it forth. Be not thou near when she draws it in; not even Poseidon's self could save thee. Choose rather to pass near to Scylla, for it is better to lose six of thy companions, than that all should perish."

Then said Ulysses, "Can I not fight with this Scylla, and so save my companions?"

But Circè answered, "Nay, for she is not of mortal race. And if thou linger to arm thyself, thou wilt but lose six others of thy companions. Pass them with all the speed that may be, and call on Crataïs, who is the mother of Scylla, that she may keep her from coming the second time. Then wilt thou come to the island of the Three Capes, where feed the oxen of the Sun. Beware that thy companions harm them not."

The next day they departed. Then Ulysses told his companions of the Sirens, and how they should deal with him. And after a while, the following wind that had blown ceased, and there was a great calm; so they took down the sails and laid them in the ship, and put forth the oars to row. Then Ulysses made great cakes of wax, kneading them (for the sun was now hot), and put into the ears of his companions. And they bound him to the mast and so rowed on. Then the Sirens sang—

"Hither, Ulysses, great Achaian name,
Turn thy swift keel, and listen to our lay;
Since never pilgrim near these regions came,
In black ship on the azure field astray,

THE ODYSSEY.

But heard our sweet voice ere he sailed away,
And in his joy passed on with ampler mind.
We know what labors were in ancient day
Wrought in wide Troia, as the gods assigned;
We know from land to land all toils of all
mankind."*

Then Ulysses prayed that they would loose him,
nodding his head, for their ears were stopped; but
they plied their oars, and Eurylochus and Perimedes
put new bonds upon him.

After this they saw a smoke and surf, and heard
a mighty roar, and their oars dropped out of their
hand for fear; but Ulysses bade them be of good heart,
for that by his counsel they had escaped other dangers
in past time. And the rowers he bade row as hard
as they might. But to the helmsman he said, "Steer
the ship outside the smoke and the surf, and steer
close to the cliffs, lest the ship shoot off unawares
and lose us." But of Scylla he said nothing, fearing
lest they should lose heart and cease rowing alto-
gether. Then he armed himself, and stood in the
prow waiting till Scylla should appear.

But on the other side Charybdis was sucking in
the water with a horrible noise, and with eddies so
deep that a man might see the sand at the bottom.
But while they looked trembling at this, Scylla caught
six of the men from the ship, and Ulysses heard
them call him by his name as the monster carried them
away. And never, he said in after days, did he see
with his eyes so piteous a sight.

But after this they came to the land where fed the
oxen of the Sun. And Ulysses said, "Let us pass by
this island, for there shall we find the greatest evil
that we have yet suffered." But they would not

* Worsley.

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hearken; only they said that the next day they would sail again.

Then spake Ulysses, "Ye constrain me, being many to one. Yet promise me this, that ye will not take any of the sheep or oxen, for if ye do great trouble will come to us."

So they promised. But for a whole month the south wind blew and ceased not. And their store of meat and drink being spent, they caught fishes and birds, as they could, being sore pinched with hunger. And at the last it chanced that Ulysses, being weary, fell asleep. And while he slept, his companions, Eurylochus persuading them, took of the oxen of the Sun, and slew them, for they said that their need was great, and that when they came to their own land they would build a temple to the Sun to make amends. But the Sun was very wroth with them. And a great and dreadful thing happened, for the hides crept, and the meat on the spits bellowed.

Six days they feasted on the oxen, and on the seventh they set sail. But when they were now out of sight of land, Zeus brought up a great storm over the sea, and a mighty west wind blew, breaking both the fore-stay and the backstay of the mast, so that it fell. And after this, a thunderbolt struck the ship, and all the men that were in it fell overboard and died. But Ulysses lashed the keel to the mast with the backstay, and on these he sat, borne by the winds across the sea.

All night was he borne along, and in the morning he came to Charybdis. And it chanced that Charybdis was then sucking in the water; but Ulysses, springing up, clung to a wild fig-tree that grew from the rock, but could find no rest for his feet, nor yet could climb into the tree. All day long he clung, waiting till the raft should come forth again; and at even-

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ing, at the time when a judge rises from his seat after judging many causes, the raft came forth. Then he loosed his hands and fell, so that he sat astride upon the raft.

After this he was borne for nine days upon the sea, till he came to the island Ogygia, where dwelt the goddess Calypso, where he was long detained an unwilling guest. How at the behest of Jove Ulysses was permitted to depart, only to suffer yet more from the vengeance of Neptune, until cast upon the coast of Alcinöus as has been before set forth.

BOOK XII: PART II

THE POEM

[Returning to Circè's Isle, the Enchantress Warns
Ulysses to Fly from the Song of the Sirens.]—
(POPE.)

THUS o'er the rolling surge the vessel flies,
Till from the waves the Ææan hills arise.
Here the gay Morn resides in radiant bowers,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing Hours;
Here Phœbus, rising in the ethereal way,
Through heaven's bright portals pours the beamy day

* * * *

"Meantime the goddess our return surveyed
From the pale ghosts and hell's tremendous shade.
Swift she descends; a train of nymphs divine
Bear the rich viands and the generous wine:
In act to speak the power of magic stands,
And graceful thus accosts the listening bands:
"O sons of woe! decreed by adverse fates
Alive to pass through hell's eternal gates!
All, soon or late, are doom'd that path to tread;
More wretched you! twice number'd with the dead!
This day adjourn your cares, exalt your souls,
Indulge the taste, and drain the sparkling bowls;
And when the morn unveils her saffron ray,
Spread your broad sails, and plough the liquid way:

THE ODYSSEY.

Lo, I this night, your faithful guide, explain
Your woes by land, your dangers on the main.'

* * * *

"Then thus: 'The lot of man the gods dispose;
These ills are past; now hear thy future woes.

* * * *

"Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plough the seas;
Their song is death, and makes destruction please.
Unblest the man, whom music wins to stay
Nigh the cursed shore, and listen to the lay.
No more that wretch shall view the joys of life,
His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife!
In verdant meads they sport; and wide around
Lie human bones that whiten all the ground:
The ground polluted floats with human gore,
And human carnage taints the dreadful shore.
Fly swift the dangerous coast; let every ear
Be stopp'd against the song! 'tis death to hear!
Firm to the mast with chains thyself be bound,
Nor trust thy virtue to the enchanting sound.
If, mad with transport, freedom thou demand.
Be every fetter strain'd, and added band to band."*

* "First shalt thou reach the Sirens, who, once heard,
Charm with their strains the souls of all mankind.
If unawares come floating on the wind
That sweet clear music which the Sirens pour,
He who hath quaffed it with his ears shall find
No voice, no welcome, on his native shore,
Shall on his dear wife gaze and lisping babes no more.

"For the shrill Sirens, couched among the flowers,
Sing melodies that lure from the great deep
The heedless mariner to their fatal bowers,
Where round about them, piled in many a heap,
Lie the bleached bones of mouldering men that sleep
Forever, and the dead skins waste away."

—(WORSLEY.)

THE ODYSSEY.

[Circè Tells of the Terrors of Scylla and Charybdis.](POPE.)

"High in the air the rock its summit shrouds
In brooding tempests, and in rolling clouds
Loud storms around, and mists eternal rise,
Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the skies.

* * * *

Impervious to the step of man it stands,
Though borne by twenty feet, though arm'd with
twenty hands;

Smooth as the polish of the mirror rise
The slippery sides, and shoot into the skies,
Full in the centre of this rock display'd,
A yawning cavern casts a dreadful shade:
Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
Sent with full force, could reach the depth below.
Wide to the west the horrid gulf extends,
And the dire passage down to hell descends.
O fly the dreadful sight! expand thy sails,
Ply the strong oar, and catch the nimble gales;
Here Scylla bellows from the dire abodes,
Tremendous pest, abhorr'd by man and gods!
Hideous her voice, and with less terrors roar
The whelps of lions in the midnight hour.
Twelve feet, deform'd and foul, the fiend dispreads;
Six horrid necks she rears, and six terrific heads;
Her jaws grin dreadful with three rows of teeth;
Jaggy they stand, the gaping den of death;
Her parts obscene the raging billows hide;
Her bosom terribly o'erlooks the tide.
When stung with hunger she embroils the flood,
The sea-dog and the dolphin are her food;
She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
And all the monsters of the watery way;
The swiftest racer of the azure plain

THE ODYSSEY.

Here fills her sails, and spreads her oars in vain;
Fell Scylla rises, in her fury roars,
At once six mouths expands, at once six men devours.

“Close by, a rock of less enormous height
Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dangerous strait;
Full on its crown a fig's green branches rise,
And shoot a leafy forest to the skies;
Beneath, Charybdis holds her boisterous reign
'Midst roaring whirlpools, and absorbs the main;
Thrice in her gulfs the boiling seas subside,
Thrice in dire thunders she refunds the tide.
Oh, if thy vessel plough the direful waves,
When seas retreating roar within her caves,
Ye perish all! though he who rules the main
Lends his strong aid, his aid he lends in vain.
Ah, shun the horrid gulf! by Scylla fly,
'Tis better six to lose, than all to die.’”

[She Warns Ulysses Not to Attempt Defense,
But to Fly with All Speed.]—(COWPER.)

So Circè spake, to whom I thus replied:
“Tell me, O Goddess, next, and tell me true!
If, chance, from fell Charybdis I escape,
May I not also save from Scylla's force
My people, should the monster threaten them?”

I said, and quick the Goddess in return:
“Unhappy! can exploits and toils of war
Still please thee? Yield'st not to the Gods themselves?
She is no mortal, but a deathless pest,
Impracticable, savage, battle-proof.
Defence is vain; flight is thy sole resource.
For should'st thou linger putting on thy arms
Beside the rock, beware lest darting forth
Her numerous heads, she seize with every mouth

THE ODYSSEY.

A Grecian, and with others, even thee.
Pass therefore swift, and passing, loud invoke
Cratais, mother of this plague of man,
Who will forbid her to assail thee more."

[Ulysses Stops His Men's Hearing with Wax,
and Commands Them to Bind Him, Against
the Siren's Song.](—(COWPER.)

* * * At the beach arrived,
I summon'd all my followers to ascend
The bark again, and cast the hawsers loose.
They, at my voice, embarking, fill'd in ranks
The seats, and rowing, thresh'd the hoary flood.
And now, melodious Circè, nymph divine,
Sent after us a canvas-stretching breeze,
Pleasant companion of our course, and we
(The decks and benches clear'd) untoiling sat,
While managed gales sped swift the bark along.
Then, with dejected heart, thus I began:

"Oh friends! (for it is needful that not one
Or two alone the admonition hear
Of Circè, beauteous prophetess divine),
To all I speak, that whether we escape
Or perish, all may be at least forewarn'd.
She bids us, first, avoid the dangerous song
Of the sweet Sirens and their flowery meads.
Me only she permits those strains to hear;
But ye shall bind me with coercion strong
Of cordage well-secured to the mast-foot,
And by no struggles to be loosed of mine.
But should I supplicate to be released
Or give such order, then, with added cords
Be it your part to bind me still the more,

THE ODYSSEY.

Thus with distinct precaution I prepared
My people; rapid in her course, meantime,
My gallant bark approach'd the Sirens' isle,
For brisk and favorable blew the wind.
Then fell the wind suddenly, and serene
A breathless calm ensued, while all around
The billows slumber'd, lull'd by power divine.
Up-sprang my people, and the folded sails
Bestowing in the hold, sat to their oars,
Which with their polish'd blades whiten'd the Deep.
I then, with edge of steel severing minute
A waxen cake, chafed it and moulded it
Between my palms; ere long the ductile mass
Grew warm, obedient to that ceaseless force,
And to Hyperion's all-pervading beams.
With that soft liniment I fill'd the ears
Of my companions, man by man.

[The Song of the Sirens and the Beguilement of
Ulysses.]—(WORSLEY.)

Then did they bind me by the hands and feet
Upright against the mast with cordage strong,
And each again retiring to his seat
Smote the calm sea with furrows white and long.
We, lightly drifting the blue waves among,
Soon in our course such interval attain
As that the ear might catch the Sirens' song.
Nor did the swift ship moving through the main
Escape them, while they sang this sweet soul-piercing
strain:

Hither, Odysseus, great Achaian name,
Turn thy swift keel and listen to our lay;
Since never pilgrim near these regions came
In black ship, on the azure fields astray,
But heard our sweet voice ere he sailed away,

THE ODYSSEY.

And in his joy passed on, with ampler mind.
We know what labors were in ancient day
Wrought in wide Troia, as the gods assigned;
We know from land to land all toils of all man-
kind.

While their sweet music took my spirit thus,
I with drawn brows made signal for release;
But Perimedes and Eurylochus
Bind me yet faster and the cords increase,
Nor for my passion would the seamen cease
Their rowing. When no more the Sirens' song
Thrilled the deep air, and on my soul came peace,
My trusty mariners unsealed ere long
Their ears, and from my limbs unwound the cordage
strong.

[Striving to Shun the Fearful Whirlpool of Charyb-
dis, the Ship Comes Near to Scylla, Who
Seizes and Devours Six Men.]—(POPE.)

"Now all at once tremendous scenes unfold;
Thunder'd the deeps, the smoky billows roll'd!
Tumultuous waves embroil the bellowing flood,
All trembling, deafen'd, and aghast we stood!
No more the vessel plough'd the dreadful wave,
Fear seized the mighty, and unnerved the brave;
Each dropp'd his oar: but swift from man to man
With looks serene I turn'd, and thus began:
'O friends! O often tried in adverse storms!
With ills familiar in more dreadful forms!

* * * *

Attend my words! your oars incessant ply;
Strain every nerve, and bid the vessel fly.

* * * *

And thou, whose guiding hand directs our way,
Pilot, attentive listen, and obey!

THE ODYSSEY.

Bear wide thy course, nor plough those angry waves
Where rolls yon smoke, yon tumbling ocean raves.
Steer by the higher rock; lest whirl'd around
We sink, beneath the circling eddy drown'd.'

While yet I speak, at once their oars they seize,
Stretch to the stroke, and brush the working seas.
Cautious the name of Scylla I suppress'd;
That dreadful sound had chill'd the boldest breast.

"Meantime, forgetful of the voice divine,
All dreadful bright my limbs in armor shine;
High on the deck I take my dangerous stand,
Two glittering javelins lighten in my hand;
Prepared to whirl the whizzing spear I stay,
Till the fell fiend arise to seize her prey.
Around the dungeon, studious to behold
The hideous pest, my laboring eyes I roll'd;
In vain! the dismal dungeon, dark as night,
Veils the dire monster, and confounds the sight.

"Now through the rocks, appall'd with deep dismay,
We bend our course, and stem the desperate way;
Dire Scylla there a scene of horror forms,
And here Charybdis fills the deep with storms.
When the tide rushing from her rumbling caves,
The rough rock roars, tumultuous boil the waves;
They toss, they foam, a wild confusion raise,
Like waters bubbling o'er the fiery blaze;
Eternal mists obscure the ærial plain,
And high above the rock she spouts the main:
When in her gulfs the rushing sea subsides,
She drains the ocean with her reflux tides:
The rock re-bellows with a thundering sound;
Deep, wondrous deep, below appears the ground.

"Struck with despair, with trembling hearts we view'd
The yawning dungeon, and the tumbling flood;

THE ODYSSEY.

When lo! fierce Scylla stoop'd to seize her prey,
Stretch'd her dire jaws, and swept six men away,
Chiefs of renown! loud-echoing shrieks arise:
I turn, and view them quivering in the skies;
They call, and aid with outstretch'd arms implore:
In vain they call! those arms are stretched no more.
As from some rock that overhangs the flood
The silent fisher casts the insidious food,
With fraudulent care he waits the finny prize,
And sudden lifts it quivering to the skies:
So the foul monster lifts her prey on high,
So pant the wretches struggling in the sky:
In the wild dungeon she devours her food,
And the flesh trembles while she churns the blood.
Worn as I am with griefs, with care decay'd,
Never, I never scene so dire survey'd!
My shivering blood, congealed, forgot to flow:
Aghast I stood, a monument of woe!

[Ulysses Exacts from His Comrades an Oath Not
to Slay the Sacred Oxen.](BRYANT.)

"Escaping thus the rocks, the dreaded haunt
Of Scylla and Charybdis, we approached
The pleasant island of the Sun, where grazed
The oxen with broad foreheads, beautiful,
And flocks of sheep, the fatlings of the god
Who makes the round of heaven. While yet at sea
I heard from my black ship the low of herds
In stables, and the bleatings of the flocks,
And straightway came into my thought the words
Of the blind seer Tiresias, him of Thebes,
And of Ææan Circé, who had oft
Warned me to shun the island of the god
Whose light is sweet to all. And then I said
To my companions with a sorrowing heart:

THE ODYSSEY.

"My comrades, sufferers as ye are, give ear.
I shall disclose the oracles which late
Tiresias and Ææan Circè gave.
The goddess earnestly admonished me
Not to approach the island of the Sun,
Whose light is sweet to all, for there she said
Some great misfortune lay in wait for us.
Now let us speed the ship and pass the isle.'
"I spake; their hearts were broken as they heard,
And bitterly Eurylochus replied:

"Austere art thou, Ulysses; thou art strung
Exceedingly; no labor tires thy limbs;
They must be made of iron, since thy will
Denies thy comrades, overcome with toil
And sleeplessness, to tread the land again,
And in that isle amid the waters make
A generous banquet. Thou wouldst have us sail
Into the swiftly coming night, and stray
Far from the island, through the misty sea.
By night spring up the mighty winds that make
A wreck of ships, and how can one escape
Destruction, should a sudden hurricane
Rise from the south or the hard-blowing west,
Such as, in spite of all the sovereign gods,
Will cause a ship to founder in the deep?
Let us obey the dark-browed Night, and take
Our evening meal, remaining close beside
Our gallant bark, and go on board again
When morning breaks, and enter the wide sea.'

"So spake Eurylochus; the rest approved.
And then I knew that some divinity
Was meditating evil to our band,
And I bespake him thus in wingéd words:

"Eurylochus, ye force me to your will,
Since I am only one. Now all of you
Bind yourselves to me firmly, by an oath,

THE ODYSSEY.

That if ye haply here shall meet a herd
Of beeves or flock of sheep, ye will not dare
To slay a single ox or sheep, but feed
Contented on the stores that Circè gave.'

"I spake, and readily my comrades swore
As I required; and when that solemn oath
Was taken, to the land we brought and moored
Our galley in a winding creek, beside
A fountain of sweet water. From the deck
Stepped my companions and made ready there
Their evening cheer. They ate and drank till thirst
And hunger were appeased, and then they thought
Of those whom Scylla from our galley's deck
Snatched and devoured; they thought and wept till
sleep
Stole softly over them amid their tears."

[Pressed by Famine, They Break Their Vow and
Slay the Oxen While Ulysses Sleeps.]—
(CHAPMAN.)

"I urg'd my friends then, that, to shun their fate,
They would observe their oath, and take the food
Our ship afforded, nor attempt the blood
Of those fair herds and flocks, because they were
The dreadful God's that all could see and hear.

"They stood observant, and in that good mind
Had we been gone; but so adverse the wind
Stood to our passage, that we could not go.
For one whole month perpetually did blow
Impetuous Notus, not a breath's repair
But his and Eurys' rul'd in all the air.
As long yet as their ruddy wine and bread
Stood out amongst them, so long not a head
Of all those oxen fell. * * *
But when their victuals fail'd they fell to prey,

THE ODYSSEY.

Necessity compell'd them then to stray
In rape of fish and fowl; whatever came
In reach of hand or hook, the belly's flame
Afflicted to it. I then fell to pray'r,
And (making to a close retreat repair,
Free from both friends and winds) I wash'd my hands,
And all the Gods besought, that held commands
In liberal heav'n, to yield some mean to stay
Their desp'rate hunger, and set up the way
Of our return restrain'd. The Gods, instead
Of giving what I pray'd for—pow'r of deed—
A deedless sleep did on my lids distill,
For mean to work upon my friends their fill.
For whiles I slept, there wak'd no mean to curb
Their headstrong wants; which he that did disturb
My rule in chief at all times, and was chief
To all the rest in counsel to their grief,
Knew well, and of my present absence took
His fit advantage, and their iron strook
At highest heat. For, feeling their desire
In his own entrails, to allay the fire
That Famine blew in them, he thus gave way
To that affection: 'Hear what I shall say,
Though words will staunch no hunger, ev'ry death
To us poor wretches that draw temporal breath
You know is hateful; but, all know, to die
The death of Famine is a misery
Past all death loathsome. Let us, therefore, take
The chief of this fair herd, and off'rings make
To all the Deathless that in broad heav'n live,
And in particular vow, if we arrive
In natural Ithaca, to straight erect
A temple to the Haughty-in-aspect,
Rich and magnificent, and all within
Deck it with relics many and divine.
If yet he stands incens'd, since we have slain

THE ODYSSEY.

His high-brow'd herd, and, therefore, will sustain
Desire to wrack our ship, he is but one,
And all the other Gods that we atone
With our divine rites will their suffrage give
To our design'd return, and let us live.
If not, and all take part, I rather crave
To serve with one sole death the yawning wave,
Than in a desert island lie and sterve,
And with one pin'd life many deaths observe.'

"All cried 'He counsels nobly,' and all speed
Made to their resolute driving; for the feed
Of those coal-black, fair, broad-brow'd, sun-lov'd beeves
Had place close by our ships. They took the lives
Of some, most eminent; about their fall
Stood round, and to the States Celestial
Made solemn vows; but other rites their ship
Could not afford them, they did, therefore, strip
The curl'd-head oak of fresh young leaves, to make
Supply of service for their barley-cake.
And on the sacredly-enflam'd, for wine,
Pour'd purest water, all the parts divine
Spitting and roasting; all the rites beside
Orderly using. Then did light divide
My low and upper lids; when, my repair
Made near my ship, I met the delicate air
Their roast exhal'd; out instantly I cried,
And said: 'O Jove, and all ye Deified,
Ye have oppress'd me with a cruel sleep,
While ye conferr'd on me a loss as deep
As Death descends to. To themselves alone
My rude men left ungovern'd, they have done
A deed so impious, I stand well assur'd,
That you will not forgive.'"

THE ODYSSEY.

[The Sun-God Demands Vengeance, and Jove,
Granting His Prayer, Decrees the Destruction
of the Greeks.](—(POPE.)

“Meantime Lampetie mounts the aërial way
And kindles into rage the god of Day:
‘Vengeance, ye powers’ (he cries) ‘and Thou whose
hand

Aims the red bolt, and hurls the writhen brand!
Slain are those herds which I with pride survey,
When through the ports of heaven I pour the day,
Or deep in ocean plunge the burning ray.
Vengeance, ye gods! or I the skies forego,
And bear the lamp of heaven to shades below.’

“To whom the thundering Power: ‘O Source of
Day!

Whose radiant lamp adorns the azure way,
Still may thy beams through heavens bright portal rise,
The joy of earth, the glory of the skies:
Lo! my red arm I bare, my thunders guide,
To dash the offenders in the whelming tide.’”

[Jove Smites the Ship in a Fierce Tempest, and
All Save Ulysses Are Lost.](—(WORSLEY.)

But when I came down to the bark and sea,
There did I each upbraid in my fierce heat
Of anger, yet could find no remedy.
The sacrilege was done, the sin complete;
And there the beeves lay dead before our feet.
Soon there appeared full many a wondrous sign;
For the skins crept, and on the spits the meat
Sent forth a lowing sound, omen divine,
Both roast and raw. The voice was as the voice of kine.

Six lights they feasted. On the seventh day
The wind ceased raving. Then the mast we rear,

THE ODYSSEY.

Spread the white canvas-wings, and sail away.
But when the island was no longer near,
Nor from the deep did any land appear,
Nor aught was visible but sea and sky,
Then Zeus Kronion in his wrath severe
Hung forth a thick cloud iron-dark on high;
And round the hollow ship the sea gloomed suddenly.

Not long she ran. Soon in wild fury passed
Loud-roaring Zephyrus. The storm of wind
Snapt like a thread both fastenings of the mast,
Which then fell backward, o'er the stern inclined,
With all its tangled armor drawn in blind
Confusion to the hold. Destruction dread
Seized on the pilot at his post assigned,
Such a resistless ruin upon his head
Smashed the skull-bones, and smote him in a moment
dead.

He like some diver of the deep I ween
Shot from the bulwarks, and the manly soul
Passed from his bones. Zeus o'er the gloomy scene
Made his loud thunder-peals in tumult roll,
And rived the ship with lightnings from the pole.
While in the blazing volley of Zeus she reeled,
Filled with red fire and smoke of sulphurous coal,
Men in the waves like sea-gulls shone revealed,
Till their returnless eyes on the god forever sealed.

I through the ship kept hurrying to and fro,
Till sundered from the ribs the keel at last
Rushed naked on the surge. Some chance did throw
Lengthwise upon the keel the covering mast,
Twined with a thong of ox-hide. Firm and fast
Both did I lash together, and sat thereon,
Borne by the furious winds. Soon Zephyr's blast

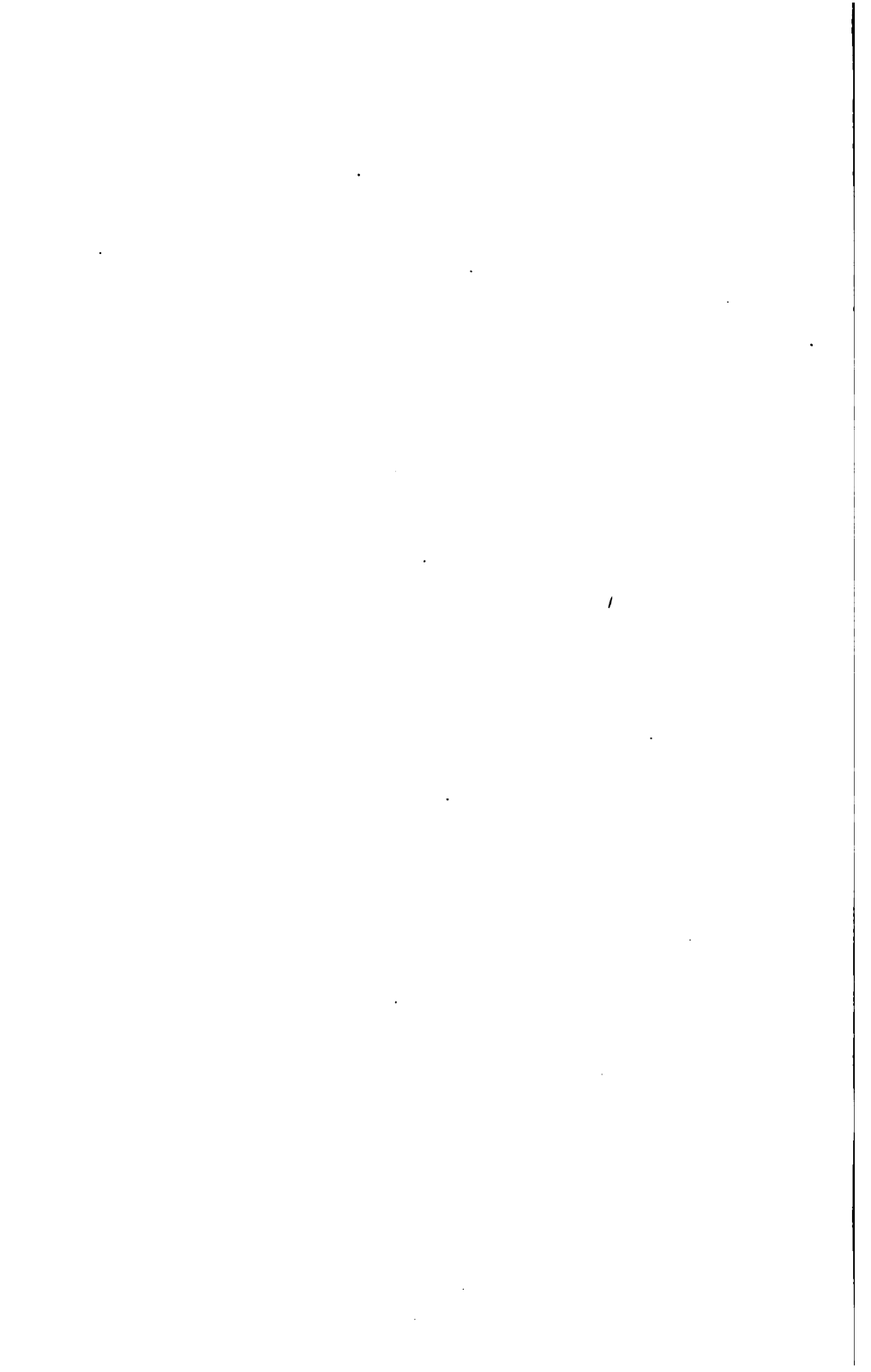
THE ODYSSEY.

Ceased, and wild Notus following made me groan,
Doomed to behold once more Charybdis' pools alone.

All night I drifted on the billowy swell,
And on the next day with the rising sun
Came upon Scylla and Charybdis fell.
She the salt brine was gorging; but I won,
Lifted sublime, the fig-tree, and thereon
Clung like a bat; but vainly everywhere
Sought resting to my feet, for stay was none.
Far were the roots, the branches wide in air,
Long, large, and overshadowing her abysmal lair.

Grimly I clung, till she the mast and keel
Disgorge; and to my prayer they came at eve,
What time a chief doth rise up for his meal,
And tired with suits the place of judgment leave.
I at the sight my shuddering clasp unweave,
And drop with dread sound in the foaming tide,
There the long timbers in my reach perceive,
Which oaring with my hands I fled, unspied
By Scylla, so willed Zeus—else surely I had died.

Thence for nine days upon the deep I rode,
And to Ogygia's isle on the tenth night
Came, guided by the gods, to the abode
Of a fair nymph divine, Calypso bright,
Voiced like a mortal, who did well requite
With tender ministration toil and pain.
But why of these things prate, which yesternight
Yourselves have heard me in these halls explain?
The wordy tale, once told, were hard to tell again.



BOOK XIII

BOOK XIII: PART I

THE STORY

THE next day King Alcinoüs put all the gifts into the ship. And when the evening was come Ulysses bade farewell to the king and to the queen, and departed.

Now Ulysses slept while the ship was sailing to Ithaca. And when it was come to the shore he yet slept. Wherefore the men lifted him out, and put him on the shore with all his goods that the princes of the Phæacians had given him, and so left him. After a while he awoke, and knew not the land, for there was a great mist about him, Athené having contrived that it should be so, for good ends, as will be seen. Very wroth was he with the men of Phæacia, thinking that they had cheated him; nor did it comfort him when he counted his goods to find that of these he had lost nothing.

But as he walked by the sea, lamenting his fate, Athené met him, having the shape of a young shepherd, fair to look upon, such as are the sons of kings; and Ulysses, when he saw him, was glad, and asked him how men called the country wherein he was.

And the false shepherd said, "Thou art foolish, or, may be, hast come from very far, not to know this country. Many men know it, both in the east and in the west. Rocky it is, not fit for horses, nor is it very broad; but it is fertile land, and full of wine; nor does it want for rain, and a good pasture, it is for

THE ODYSSEY.

oxen and goats; and men call it Ithaca. Even in Troy, which is very far, they say, from this land of Greece, men have heard of Ithaca."

This Ulysses was right glad to hear. Yet he was not minded to say who he was, but rather to feign a tale.

So he said, "Yes, of a truth, I heard of this Ithaca in Crete, from which I am newly come with all this wealth, leaving also as much behind for my children. For I slew Orsilochus, son of Idomeneus the king, because he would have taken from me my spoil. Wherefore I slew him, lying in wait for him by the way. Then made I covenant with certain Phœnicians that they should take me to Pylos or to Elis; which thing indeed they were minded to do, only the wind drave them thither, and while I slept they put me upon the shore, and my possessions with me, and departed to Sidon."

This pleased Athené much, and she changed her shape, becoming like a woman, tall and fair, and said to Ulysses—

"Right cunning would be he who could cheat thee. Even now in thy native country cease thou not from cunning words and deceits! But let these things be; for thou, I trow, art the wisest of mortal men, and I excel among the gods in counsel. For I am Athené, daughter of Zeus, who am ever wont to stand by thee and help thee. And now we will hide these possessions of thine; and thou must be silent, nor tell to any one who thou art, and endure many things, so that thou mayest come to thine own again."

But still Ulysses doubted, and would have the goddess tell him whether of a truth he had come back to his native land. And she, commending his prudence, scattered the mist that was about him.

Then Ulysses knew the land, and kissed the ground,

THE ODYSSEY.

and prayed to the Nymphs that they would be favorable to him. And after this, Athené guiding him, he hid away his possessions in a cave, and put a great stone on the mouth. Then the two took counsel together.

And Athené said, "Think, man of many devices, how thou wilt lay hands on these men, suitors of thy wife, who for three years have sat in thy house devouring thy substance. And she hath answered them craftily, making many promises, but still waiting for thy coming."

Then Ulysses said, "Truly I had perished, even as Agamemnon perished, but for thee. But do thou help me, as of old in Troy, for with thee at my side I would fight with three hundred men."

Then said Athené, "Lo! I will cause that no man shall know thee, for I will wither the fair flesh on thy limbs, and take the bright hair from thy head, and make thine eyes dull. And the suitors shall take no account of thee, neither shall thy wife nor thy son know thee. But go to the swineherd Eumæus, where he dwells by the fountain of Arethusa, for he is faithful to thee and to thy house. And I will hasten to Sparta, to the house of Menelaüs, to fetch Telemachus, for he went thither, seeking news of thee."

Then Athené changed him into the shape of a beggar-man. She caused his skin to wither, and his hair to fall off, and his eyes to grow dim, and put on him filthy rags, with a great stag's hide about his shoulders, and in his hand a staff, and a wallet on his shoulder, fastened by a rope.

BOOK XIII: PART II

THE POEM

[Ulysses Bids Farewell to King Alcinoüs and
Queen Aretè, and Sails for Ithaca.](BRY-
ANT.)

HE spake, and all within those shadowy halls
Were silent; all were held in mute delight.

* * * *

Meantime Ulysses often turned to look
At the bright Sun, and longed to see him set,
So eager was the hero to set sail
Upon his homeward way. As when a swain
Awaits his evening meal, for whom all day
Two dark-brown steers have dragged the solid plough
Through fallow grounds, and welcome is the hour
Of sunset, calling him to his repast,
And wearily he walks with failing knees,
So welcome to Ulysses did the light
Of day go down. Then did he hold discourse
With the Phæacians, lovers of the sea,
And chiefly with Alcinoüs, speaking thus:
"O monarch most illustrious of thy race,
Alcinoüs, now when ye have duly poured
Wine to the gods, be pleased to send me hence
In peace, and fare ye well! All that my heart
Could wish have ye provided bounteously,
An escort and rich gifts; and may the gods

THE ODYSSEY.

Bestow their blessing with them! May I meet
My blameless wife again, and find my friends
Prosperous! And ye whom I shall leave behind,
Long may ye make the wives of your young years
And children happy! May the gods vouchsafe
To crown with every virtue you and them,
And may no evil light upon your isle!"

He spake; the assembly all approved his words,
And bade send forth the stranger on his way,
Who spake so nobly. * * *

And then the great Ulysses, rising up,
Placed the round goblet in Aretè's hands,
And thus bespake the queen with wingéd words:

"Farewell, O queen, through the long years, till age
And death, which are the lot of all, shall come.
Now I depart, but mayst thou, here among
Thy people, and the children of thy love,
And King Alcinoüs, lead a happy life!"

So spake the high-born chieftain, and withdrew,
And crossed the threshold. King Alcinoüs sent

A herald with him to direct his way

To the fleet ship and border of the deep.

Aretè also sent her servant-maids,—

One bearing a fresh cloak and tunic, one

A coffer nobly wrought, and yet a third

Bread and red wine; and when they reached the ship

Beside the sea, the diligent crew received

Their burdens, and bestowed within the hold

The food and drink, but spread upon the deck

And at the stern a mat and linen sheet,

That there Ulysses undisturbed might sleep.

He went on board and silently lay down;

While all the rowers in due order took

Their seats upon the benches. Loosing first

The hawser from the perforated rock,

They bent them to their task, and flung the brine

THE ODYSSEY.

Up from the oar, while on the chieftain's lids
Lighted a sweet and deep and quiet sleep,
Most like to death. As, smitten by the lash,
Four harnessed stallions spring on high and dart
Across the plain together; so the prow
Rose leaping forward, while behind it rolled
A huge dark billow of the roaring sea.
Safely and steadily the galley ran,
Nor could a falcon, swiftest of the birds,
Have kept beside it, with such speed it flew,
Bearing a hero who was like the gods
In wisdom, and whose sufferings in the wars
And voyages among the furious waves
Were great and many, though he slumbered now
In peace, forgetful of misfortunes past.

[Wrapped in Deep Sleep, Ulysses, With His
Treasures, Is Left by the Mariners on the
Strand of His Own Isle of Ithaca.](—(WORS-
LEY.)

When rose the star most brilliant, which through
heaven
News of the light of early Dawn doth bring,
Then the good bark on Ithaca was driven—
And lo! the port of Phorcys, old sea-king,
Where on each side the shore puts forth a wing
And clasps the bay with headlands. These restrain
The hoarse floods which the outer hurricanes fling,
And well-built ships, which come there from the
main,
Lie without hawsers safe on that still marble plain.

And a thick olive at the haven-head
Stands near a cavern, deep dark lovely lair,
Shrine of the Naiad-nymphs, with vases spread

THE ODYSSEY.

And bowls of stone; wild bees make honey there;
And on stone looms the Nymphs weave raiment fair,
Sea-purpled, wondrous; and fresh fountains flow.
Northward lie gate-ways trod by men, but ne'er
Can steps of mortals by the south door go;
None save diviner feet that sacred path may know.

Here, well aware, they ran the bark ashore.
She to the half keel through the shelving sand
Clave furrowing, such strong seamen plied the oar;
Who from the well-built benches leap to land,
And first Odysseus to his native strand,
Wrapt in white linen and rich rugs, bear swift.
Him on the shore, yet sleeping, near at hand
They place, then quickly each resplendent gift,
Seal of Athené's favor, from the vessel lift.

All these beside the olive-stem they set,
A little from the path which that way led,
That no chance comer spoil his goods, ere yet
Sleep from the eyelids of Odysseus fled.
They then pass homeward.

[Ulysses, Awaking Bewildered, Knows Not His
Home, Is Greeted by Pallas in Disguise, and
Learns That He Is in Ithaca.](—(WORSLEY.)

Divine Odysseus from his sleep anon
Rose up, nor knew the long-lost land; for then
Pallas Athené poured a mist thereon,
Making the place seem diverse in his ken,
And veiled him also from the eyes of men,
Thus to reveal each several fact aright,
That him nor wife nor friend nor citizen
Know for their lord, till he the fell despite
Of the whole suitor-train should violently requite.

THE ODYSSEY.

Hence o'er the land there hung a cloud of change.
Cliffs, and tall forests waving their rough hair,
Lines of long pathway, to the king seemed strange,
Harbors, and hills, and rocks that scale the air.
So on a sudden he uprose, and there,
Over his native fields in sore surprise
Gazing, his sorrow did with groans declare,
And smote with vehement palms on both his thighs,
And a sad word spake forth with dark tears in his eyes.

* * * *

So he of tripods, caldrons, raiment, gold,
Counted full tale; anon with many a tear,
Where on the beach the roaring waters rolled,
Crept, moaning his dear earth. And lo! came near
Athené, like some youthful overseer
Of flocks, all-delicate, as a chieftain's son.
She round her shoulders a rich cloak did wear
Twice folded, and her shining feet had on
Fair sandals; in her hand a steely javelin shone.

Glad was Odysseus, and came near and spake:
"Friend, since thee first upon this soil I see,
Hail thou, nor wrong me! For my sorrow's sake
Deign to preserve these treasures and save me!
For to thy knees I come, and pray to thee
As to a god. This also tell me true—
What land, what state, what people here may be.
Is this some island very plain to view,
Or mainland-coast down-sloping toward the billows
blue?"

To whom Athené, stern-eyed goddess, spake:
"Stranger, thou lackest sense or com'st from far,
Who question of this soil art fain to make.
Not nameless is it. Many men there are,
Who in the west or toward the morning star

THE ODYSSEY.

Inhabit, and our country know full well.
Rough is the land, nor can one drive a car
Through the rude ways, for steeds impassable,
Yet not too poor, though least in space our shores
excel.

"For still much plenty both of corn and wine
Lives in the land, and the life-showering dew
Nurtures the fields, and fruitful rains divine;
For goats and steers both rocks and glades renew
Sweet pasture; woods of every grain and hue
Flourish; and fair streams flow the whole year round.
Hence even in Troia, if they tell me true,
Far off, O stranger, from Achaian ground,
Doth echo of the name of Ithaca resound."

She spake. Divine Odysseus in his heart,
Glad from innumerable toils, the name
Of his dear country hailed.

[Pallas Appears to Ulysses and Bids Him Be of
Good Cheer.](—(BRYANT.)

* * * The blue-eyed goddess, Pallas, smiled,
And touched the chief caressingly. She seemed
A beautiful and stately woman now,
Such as are skilled in works of rare device,
And thus she said to him in wingéd words:

* * * "Dost thou not yet know
Pallas Athenè, child of Jove, whose aid
Is present to defend thee in all time
Of peril, and but lately gained for thee
The favor of the whole Phæacian race?
And hither am I come to frame for thee
Wise counsels, and to hide away the stores
Given by the opulent Phæacian chiefs

THE ODYSSEY.

At thy departure. I shall also tell
What thou must yet endure beneath the roof
Of thine own palace, by the will of fate.
Yet bear it bravely, since thou must, nor speak
To any man or woman of thyself
And of thy wandering hither, but submit
To many things that grieve thee, silently,
And bear indignities from violent men."

* * * *

So spake the goddess, and dispersed the mist,
And all the scene appeared. Ulysses saw
Well pleased, rejoicing in his own dear land,
And, stooping, kissed the bountiful earth, and raised
His hands, and thus addressed the nymphs in prayer:

"Nymphs, Naiads, born to Jove, I did not hope
To be with you again. With cheerful prayers
I now salute you. We shall bring you soon
Our offerings, as of yore, if graciously
Jove's daughter, huntress-queen, shall grant me yet
To live, and bless my well-beloved son."

And then the goddess, blue-eyed Pallas, said:
"Be of good cheer, and let no anxious thought
Disturb thy mind."

[Pallas, Planning with Ulysses the Destruction of
the Suitors, Gives Him the Semblance of an
Aged and Feeble Beggar.](—COWPER.)

Then, on the consecrated olive's root
Both seated, they in consultation plann'd
The deaths of those injurious suitors proud,
And Pallas, blue-eyed Goddess, thus began:

"Laertes' noble son, Ulysses! think
By what means likeliest thou shalt assail
Those shameless suitors, who have now controll'd

THE ODYSSEY.

Three years thy family, thy matchless wife
With language amorous and with spousal gifts
Urging importunate; but she, with tears
Watching thy wish'd return, hope gives to all
By messages of promise sent to each,
Framing far other purposes the while."

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd:
"Ah, Agamemnon's miserable fate
Had surely met me in my own abode,
But for thy gracious warning, power divine!
Come then—Devise the means; teach me, thyself,
The way to vengeance, and my soul inspire
With daring fortitude, as when we loosed
Her radiant frontlet from the brows of Troy.
Would'st thou with equal zeal, O Pallas! aid
Thy servant here, I would encounter thrice
An hundred enemies, let me but perceive
Thy dread divinity my prompt ally."

Him answer'd then Pallas cœrulean-eyed:
"And such I will be; not unmark'd by me,
(Let once our time of enterprise arrive)
Shalt thou assail them. Many, as I judge,
Of those proud suitors who devour thy wealth
Shall leave their brains then on thy palace-floor.
But come. Behold! I will disguise thee so
That none shall know thee; I will parch the skin
On thy fair body; I will cause thee shed
Thy wavy locks; I will enfold thee round
In such a kirtle as the eyes of all
Shall loathe to look on; and I will deform
With blurring rheums thy eyes, so vivid erst;
So shall the suitors deem thee, and thy wife,
And thy own son whom thou didst leave at home,
Some sordid wretch obscure. But seek thou first

THE ODYSSEY.

Thy swineherd's mansion; he, alike, intends
Thy good, and loves affectionate thy son
And thy Penelope; thou shalt find the swain
Tending his herd. * * *

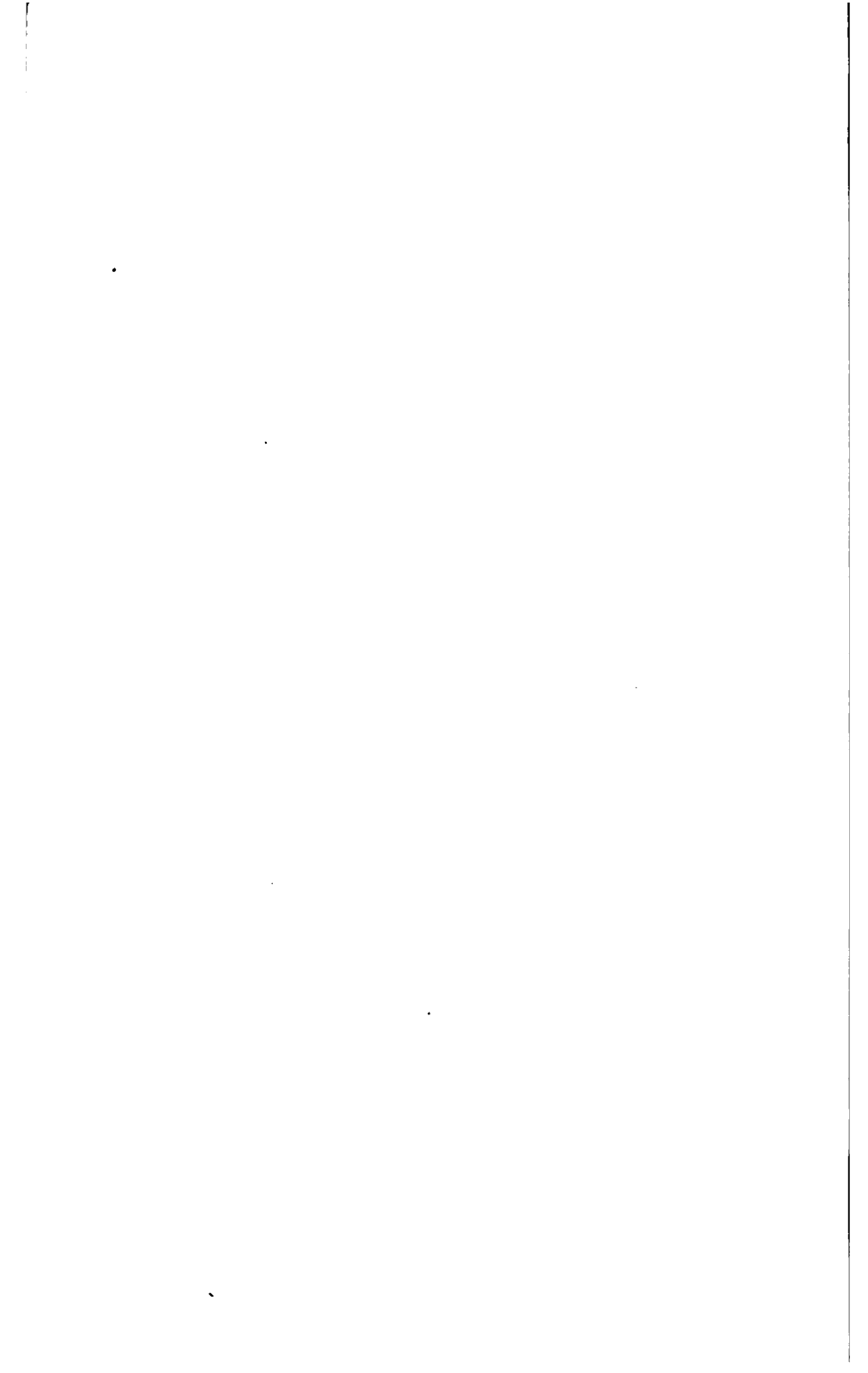
There waiting, question him of thy concerns,
While I from Sparta praised for women fair
Call home thy son Telemachus, a guest
With Menelaüs now, whom to consult
In spacious Lacedæmon he is gone,
Anxious to learn if yet his father lives."

* * * *

So saying, the Goddess touch'd him with a wand.
At once o'er all his agile limbs she parch'd
The polish'd skin; she wither'd to the root
His wavy locks, and clothed him with the hide
Deform'd of wrinkled age; she charged with rheums
His eyes before so vivid, and a cloak
And kirtle gave him, tatter'd both, and foul,
And smutch'd with smoke; then casting over all
An huge old deer-skin bald, with a long staff
She furnish'd him, and with a wallet patch'd
On all sides, dangling by a twisted thong.

Thus all their plan adjusted, different ways
They took, and she, seeking Ulysses' son,
To Lacedæmon's spacious realm repair'd.

BOOK XIV



BOOK XIV: PART I

THE STORY

WHEN she departed, and Ulysses went to the house of Eumæus, the swineherd. A great court-yard there was, and twelve sties for the sows, and four watch-dogs, big as wild beasts, for such did the swineherd breed. He himself was shaping sandals, and of his men three were with the swine in the fields, and one was driving a fat beast to the city, to be meat for the suitors. But when Ulysses came near, the dogs ran upon him, and he dropped his staff and sat down, and yet would have suffered harm, even on his own thresh-old; but the swineherd ran forth and drove away the dogs, and brought the old man in, and gave him a seat of brushwood, with a great goat-skin over it.

And Ulysses said, "Zeus and the other gods requite thee for this kindness."

Then the two talked of matters in Ithaca, and Eumæus told how the suitors of the queen were devouring the substance of Ulysses. Then the false beggar asked him of the king, saying that perchance, having traveled far, he might know such an one.

But Eumæus said, "Nay, old man, thus do all way-farers talk, yet we hear no truth from them. Not a vagabond fellow comes to this island but our queen must see him, and ask him many things, weeping the while. And thou, I doubt not, for a cloak or a tunic, would tell a wondrous tale. But Ulysses, I

THE ODYSSEY.

know, is dead, and either the fowls of the air devour him or the fishes of the sea."

And when the false beggar would have comforted him, saying he knew of a truth that Ulysses would yet return, he hearkened not. Moreover, he prophesied evil for Telemachus also, who had gone to seek news of his father, but would surely be slain by the suitors, who were even now lying in wait for him as he should return. And after this he asked the stranger who he was and whence he had come. Then Ulysses answered him craftily—

"I am a Cretan, the son of one Castor, by a slave woman. Now my father, while he lived, did by me as by his other sons. But when he died they divided his goods, and gave me but a small portion, and took my dwelling from me. Yet I won a rich wife for myself, for I was brave and of good repute. No man would sooner go to battle or to ambush than I, and I loved ships and spears and arrows, which some men hate, I trow. Nine times did I lead my followers in ships against strangers, and the tenth time I went with King Idomeneus to Troy. And when the city of Priam had perished, I went back to my native country, and there for the space of one month I tarried with my wife, and afterwards I sailed with nine ships to Egypt. On the fifth day—for the gods gave us a prosperous voyage—we came to the river of Egypt. There did my comrades work much wrong to the people of the land, spoiling their fields, and leading into captivity their wives and children, nor would they hearken to me when I would have stayed them. Then the Egyptians gathered an army, and came upon them, and slew some and took others. And I, throwing down helmet and spear and shield, hastened to the king of the land where he sat in his chariot, and prayed that he would have mercy on me, which thing he did. And with him

THE ODYSSEY.

I dwelt for seven years, gathering much wealth. But in the eighth year there came a trader of Phœnicia, who beguiled me, that I went with him to his country. And there I tarried for a year; and afterwards he carried me in his ship to Libya, meaning to sell me as a slave, but Zeus brake the ship, so that I was only left alive. Nine days did I float, keeping hold of the mast, and on the tenth a wave cast me on the land of Thresprotia, where King Pheidon kindly entreated me, giving me food and raiment. There did I hear tell of Ulysses; yea, and saw the riches which he had gathered together, which King Pheidon was keeping till he himself should come back from Dodona, from the oracle of Zeus. Thence I sailed in a ship for Dulichium, purposing to go to King Acastus, but the sailors were minded to sell me for a slave. Therefore they left me bound in a ship, but themselves took their supper on the shore. But in the meanwhile I brake my bonds, the gods helped me, and leaping into the sea, swam to the land and hid myself in a wood that was near."

All this tale did Ulysses tell; but Eumæus doubted whether these things were so, thinking rather that the beggar-man said these things to please him. After this they talked much, and when the swineherd's men were returned they all feasted together. And the night being cold, and there being much rain, Ulysses was minded to see whether one would lend him a cloak; wherefore he told this tale—

"Once upon a time there was laid an ambush near to the city of Troy. And Menelaüs and Ulysses and I were the leaders of it. In the reeds we sat, and the night was cold, and the snow lay upon our shields. Now all the others had cloaks, but I had left mine behind at the ships. So when the night was three parts spent I spake to Ulysses, 'Here am I without a cloak;

THE ODYSSEY.

soon, methinks, shall I perish with the cold.' Soon did he bethink him of a remedy, for he was ever ready with counsel. Therefore to me he said, 'Hush, lest some one hear thee,' and to the others, 'I have been warned in a dream. We are very far from the ships, and in peril. Wherefore let some one run to the ships to King Agamemnon, that he send more men to help.' Then Thoas, son of Andræmon, rose up and ran, casting off his cloak, and this I took, and slept warmly therein. Were I this night such as then I was, I should not lack such kindness even now."

Then said Eumæus, "This is well spoken, old man. Thou shalt have a cloak to cover thee. But in the morning thou must put on thy own rags again. Yet perchance, when the son of Ulysses shall come, he will give thee new garments."

After this they slept, but Eumæus tarried without, keeping watch over the swine.

BOOK XIV: PART II

THE POEM

[Ulysses Encounters Eumæus, the Swineherd,
Who Befriends Him.](—(POPE.)

BUT he, deep musing, o'er the mountains stray'd
Through mazy thickets of the woodland shade.
And cavern'd ways, the shaggy coast along,
With cliffs and nodding forests overhung,
Eumæus at his silvan lodge he sought,
A faithful servant, and without a fault.
Ulysses found him busied, as he sate
Before the threshold of his rustic gate;

* * *

Four savage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.
Here sat Eumæus, and his cares applied
To form strong buskins of well-season'd hide.

* * *

Soon as Ulysses near the inclosure drew
With open mouths the furious mastiffs flew:
Down sat the sage, and cautious to withstand,
Let fall the offensive truncheon from his hand.
Sudden, the master runs; aloud he calls;
And from his hasty hand the leather falls;
With showers of stones he drives them far away:
The scattering dogs around at distance bay.

"Unhappy stranger!" (thus the faithful swain
Began with accent gracious and humane).

THE ODYSSEY.

'What sorrow had been mine, if at my gate
Thy reverend age had met a shameful fate!
Enough of woes already have I known;
Enough my master's sorrows and my own.
While here (ungrateful task!) his herds I feed,
Ordain'd for lawless rioters to bleed!
Perhaps, supported at another's board,
Far from his country roams my hapless lord!
Or sigh'd in exile forth his latest breath,
Now covered with the eternal shade of death!

"But enter this my homely roof and see
Our woods not void of hospitality.
Then tell me whence thou art, and what the share
Of woes and wanderings thou wert born to bear."

He said, and, seconding the kind request,
With friendly step precedes his unknown guest,
A shaggy goat's soft hide beneath him spread,
And with fresh rushes heap'd an ample bed;
Jove touched the hero's tender soul, to find
So just reception from a heart so kind;
And "Oh, ye gods! with all your blessings grace"
(He thus broke forth) "this friend of human race!"

[Eumæus, the Swineherd, Gives Hospitality to the
Stranger.](—COWPER.)

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
"My guest! I should offend, treating with scorn
The stranger, though a poorer should arrive
Than even thyself; for all the poor that are,
And all the strangers are the care of Jove.
Little, and with good will, is all that lies
Within my scope; no man can much expect
From servants living in continual fear
Under young masters. * * *"

THE ODYSSEY.

So saying, he girdled, quick, his tunic close,
And issuing, sought the styes; thence bringing two
Of the imprison'd herd, he slaughter'd both,
Singed them, and slash'd and spitted them, and placed
The whole well-roasted banquet, spits and all,
Reeking before Ulysses; last with flour
He sprinkled them, and filling with rich wine
His ivy goblet, to his master sat
Opposite, whom inviting thus he said:

"Now, eat, my guest! such as a servant may
I set before thee, neither large of growth
Nor fat; the fatted—those the suitors eat,
Fearless of heaven, and pitiless of man.
Yet deeds unjust as theirs the blessed Gods
Love not; they honor equity and right.
Even an hostile band when they invade
A foreign shore, which by consent of Jove
They plunder, and with laden ships depart,
Even they with terrors quake of wrath divine.
But these are wiser; these must sure have learn'd
From some true oracle my master's death,
Who neither deign with decency to woo,
Nor yet to seek their homes, but boldly waste
His substance, shameless now, and sparing nought.
Jove ne'er hath given us yet the night or day
When with a single victim, or with two
They would content them, and his empty jars
Witness how fast the squanderers use his wine."

* * * *

[The Stranger Swears to Eumæus That Ulysses
Will Soon Return.](—(COWPER.)

He ceased: meantime Ulysses ate and drank
Voracious, meditating mute the death

THE ODYSSEY.

Of those proud suitors. His repast at length,
Concluded and his appetite sufficed,
Eumæus gave him, charged with wine, the cup
From which he drank himself; he glad received
The boon and in wing'd accents thus began:

"My brave friend, and who was he, wealthy and brave
As thou describest the Chief, who purchased thee?
Thou say'st he perish'd for the glory-sake
Of Agamemnon. Name him; I perchance
May have beheld the hero. None can say
But Jove and the inhabitants of heaven
That I ne'er saw him, and may not impart
News of him; I have roam'd through many a clime."

To whom the noble swineherd thus replied:
"Alas, old man! no traveler's tale of him
Will gain his consort's credence, or his son's;
For wanderers wanting entertainment forge
Falsehoods for bread, and wilfully deceive.
No wanderer lands in Ithaca, but he seeks
With feign'd intelligence my mistress' ear;
She welcomes all, and while she questions each
Minutely, from her lids lets fall the tear
Affectionate, as well beseems a wife
Whose mate hath perished in a distant land.
Thou could'st thyself, no doubt, my hoary friend!
(Would any furnish thee with decent vest
And mantle) fabricate a tale with ease,
Yet sure it is that dogs and fowls long since
His skin have stript, or fishes of the deep
Have eaten him, and on some distant shore
Whelm'd in deep sands his mouldering bones are laid.
So hath he perish'd; whence to all his friends,
But chiefly to myself, sorrow of heart;
For such another Lord, gentle as he,
Wherever sought, I have no hope to find,

THE ODYSSEY.

Though I should wander even to the house
Of my own father. Neither yearns my heart
So feelingly (though that desiring too)
To see once more my parents and my home,
As to behold Ulysses yet again.
Ah stranger! absent as he is, his name
Fills me with reverence, for he loved me much,
Cared for me much, and though we meet no more,
Holds still an elder brother's part in me."

Him answer'd then, the hero toil-inured:
"My friend! since his return, in thy account,
Is an event impossible, and thy mind
Always incredulous that hope rejects,
I shall not slightly speak, but with an oath.—
Ulysses comes again; and I demand
No more, than that the boon such news deserves,
Be given me soon as he shall reach his home.
Then give me vest and mantle fit for wear,
Which, ere that hour, much as I need them both,
I neither ask, nor will accept from thee.
For him whom poverty can force aside
From truth—I hate him as the gates of hell.
Be Jove, of all in heaven, my witness first,
Then this thy hospitable board, and last,
The household Gods of the illustrious chief
Himself, Ulysses, to whose gates I go,
That all my words shall surely be fulfill'd.
In this same year Ulysses shall arrive;
Ere, this month closed, another month succeed,
He shall return, and punish all who dare
Insult his consort and his noble son."

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
"Old friend! that boon thou ne'er wilt earn from me;
Ulysses comes no more. But thou thy wine

THE ODYSSEY.

Drink quietly, and let us find at length
Some other theme; recall not this again
To my remembrance, for my soul is grieved
Oft as reminded of my honor'd lord.
Let the oath rest, and let Ulysses come
Even as myself, and as Penelope,
And as his ancient father, and his son
Godlike Telemachus, all wish he may.

* * * *

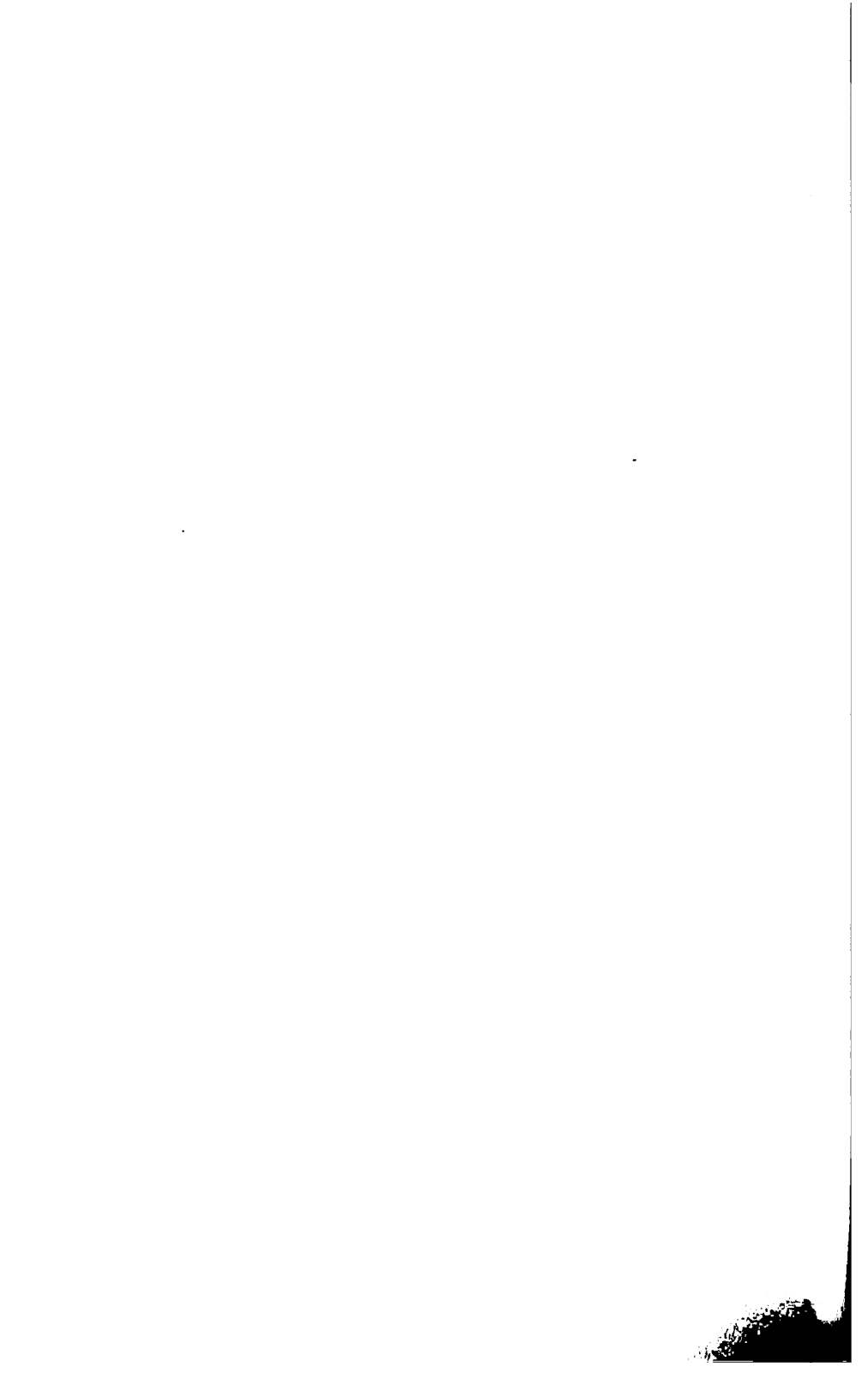
"He after tidings of his sire is gone
To far-famed Pylus; his return, meantime,
In ambush hidden the proud suitors wait,
That the whole house may perish of renown'd
Arcesias, named in Ithaca no more.
But whether he have fallen or 'scaped, let him
Rest also, whom Saturnian Jove protect!"

* * * *

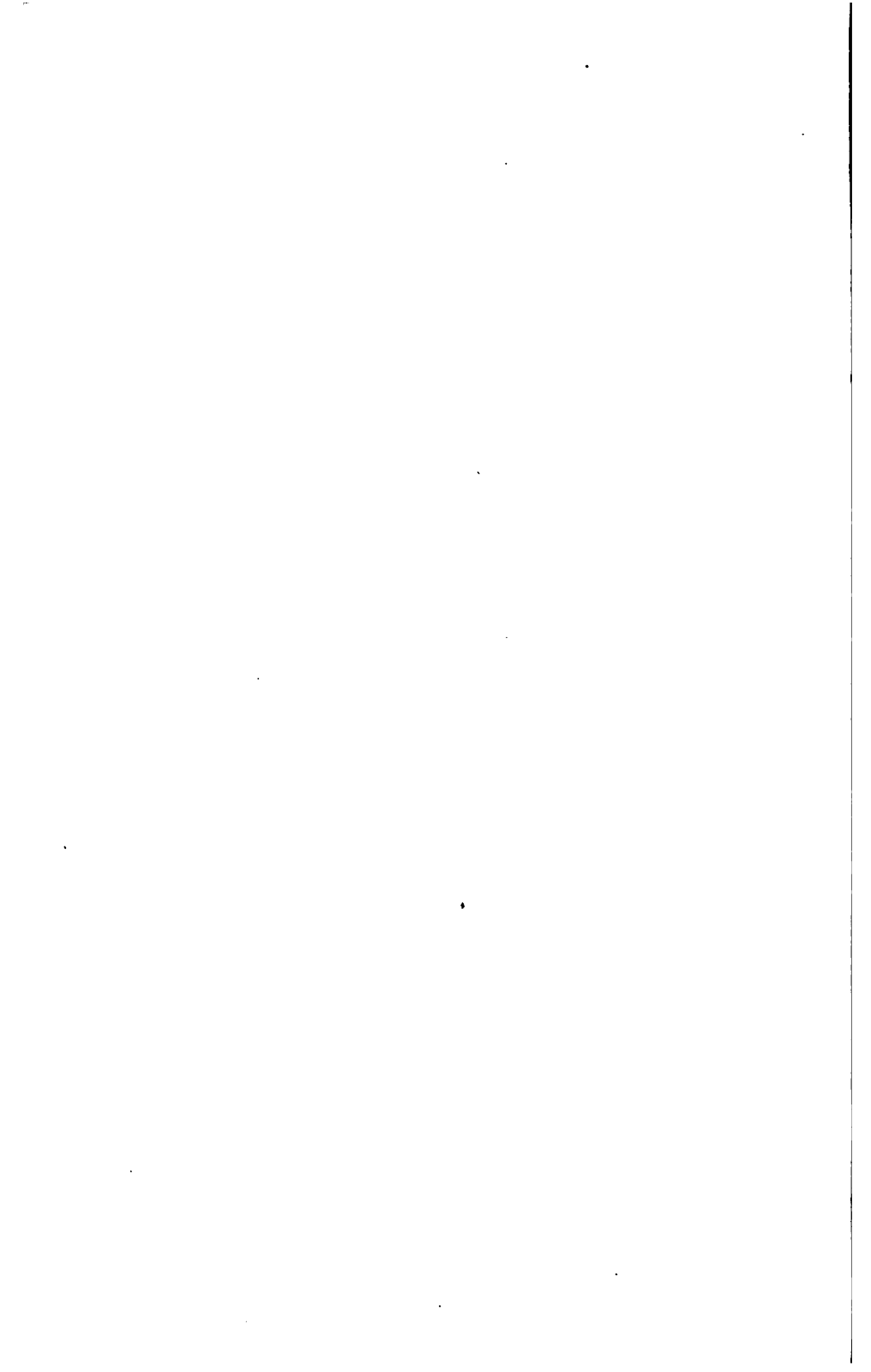
So saying, he rose, and nearer made his couch
To the hearth-side, spreading it thick with skins
Of sheep and goats; then lay the hero down,
O'er whom a shaggy mantle large he threw,
Which oft-times served him with a change, when rough
The winter's blast and terrible arose.
So was Ulysses bedded, and the youths
Slept all beside him; but the master-swain
Chose not his place of rest so far remote
From his rude charge, but to the outer court
With his nocturnal furniture repair'd,
Gladdening Ulysses' heart that one so true
In his own absence kept his rural stores.
Athwart his sturdy shoulders first he slung
His faulchion keen, then wrapp'd him in a cloak
Thick woven, winter proof; he lifted, next,
The skin of a well-thriven goat, in bulk

THE ODYSSEY

Surpassing others, and his javelin took
Sharp-pointed, with which dogs he drove and men.
Thus arm'd, he sought his wonted couch beneath
A hollow rock where the herd slept, secure
From the sharp current of the Northern blast.



BOOK XV



BOOK XV: PART I

THE STORY

NOW all this time Telemachus tarried in Sparta with King Menelaüs. To him went Athené, and warned him that he should return to his home, for that the suitors were devouring his substance, and that Penelope, his mother, was much pressed by her father and her brothers to marry Eurymachus, who indeed of all the suitors promised the largest. Also she warned him that the suitors had laid an ambush to slay him in the strait between Samos and Ithaca, and that he should keep clear of the island; and as soon as ever he came near to Ithaca he should land and go to the swineherd Eumæus, and send him to his mother, with tidings of his being safely arrived.

Then Telemachus woke Pisistratus, and would have departed forthwith, only Pisistratus urged him that he should stay till the morning. So when the morning was come he would take leave of Menelaüs and Helen.

And first Menelaüs said that he would go with him through all the land of Greece, whithersoever he would; but seeing that his heart was steadfastly set to return to his home, he gave him gifts that he might take with him, and Helen also gave him a gift, the fairest robe that she had.

Then they departed; and that night they came to Phææ, and lodged with Diocles, the son of Orisilochus, and the next night to Pylos, where old Nestor dwelt.

THE ODYSSEY.

And the next day, while they were doing sacrifice to Athené, behold! there came one Theoclymenus, a seer, who dwelt in Argos, and there had slain a man, wherefore he had fled; and now, seeing Telemachus, and hearing who he was, he prayed that he would receive him into his ship. Which thing Telemachus was willing to do. So the two departed together. And when they were come to Ithaca, Telemachus bade the men take the ship to the city, saying that he was minded to see his farms, but that in the evening he would come to the city, and would feast them with flesh and wine. And Theoclymenus he bade join himself to Eurymachus, who, he said, was the best of those that were suitors to his mother. And as he spake there appeared a hawk on his right hand, and it struck a dove, even between him and the ship.

Then the seer called him aside and said, "This is a sign from the gods. There is no house in Ithaca more to be feared than thine."

Then Telemachus was glad, and commended the seer to Piræus, who was the most faithful of his followers. After this the ship sailed to the city, but Telemachus went to the dwelling of the swineherd Eumæus.

BOOK XV: PART II

THE POEM

[Counseled by Pallas to Return, and Warned That
the Suitors Lie in Wait to Slay Him, Tele-
machus Takes Leave of Menelaüs.]—(WORS-
LEY.)

TO spacious Lacedæmon went meanwhile
Athené, there to urge Odysseus' son
With memory of return to his own isle.
There she Telemachus and Nestor's son
Couched in the corridor found sleeping,—one
Asleep, the child of Nestor,—but sweet rest
To eyelids of Telemachus came none;
He through ambrosial night lay sore distressed,
Such care for his dear father filled his wakeful breast.

Stern-eyed Athené standing near him spake:
"Telemachus, no longer seems it well
To wander far away, while spoilers take
Thy treasures. Up, lest these destroyers fell
Eat all thy goods between them, while men tell
How on a bootless journey thou didst go.
Thou with persuasion thy brave host impel
To send thee quickly o'er the seas, that so
Thou find thy blameless mother yet at home. For
know,

THE ODYSSEY.

"Father and brothers her e'en now incite
Eurymachus to marry. * * *

"Now homeward, and to her thy house confide
Whom of thy household thou dost worthiest rate,
Till the gods show thee an illustrious bride.
Here too this word, this hearken, ere too late:
'Twixt Ithaca and Samos in the strait,
Couched in convenient ambush men there are,
Picked from the suitors, who to slay thee wait.
Yet, if I err not, first shall Earth embar
Deep in her womb those traitors, who thy substance
mar.

"Keep well clear of the islands, sail by night;
Thy guardian god shall give thee a good wind.
But, soon as Ithaca stands fair in sight,
Thrust toward the town thy vessel, and first find
The swineherd, who doth guard with loyal mind
Thy swine, and with a single heart serve thee.
There sleep the night out, in his hut reclined;
Then send him to discreet Penelope
To tell that safe from Pylos thou hast sailed the sea."

This spoken, she to far Olympus went;
But he the son of Nestor from sweet sleep
Stirred with his heel, and wingèd words forth sent:
"Wake, son of Nestor, from thy drowsings deep!
Time is that reckoning of our road we keep.
Up, yoke the whole-hoofed horses, and away!"

* * *

* * * Golden-throned Morning came.
Then Atreus' son, great wielder of the spear,
From bright-haired Heken rose, and to his guests
came near.

* * *

THE ODYSSEY.

To whom the sage Telemachus then spake:
"Atrides Menelaüs, Zeus-born king,
Fain would I now to mine own hearth go back;
For when to Pylos me my bark did bring,
Guardless at home did I leave everything;
And at this moment is my soul in doubt
Lest on my life some secret danger spring,
While on my father's quest I roam about,
Or from my halls perforce good treasure be taken out."

This when the warrior Menelaüs heard,
Then he his wife and handmaids bade prepare
Food in the halls—who straight attend his word.

* * * *

But when at last they made an end to eat,
Telemachus and Nestor's son renowned
First yoke the long-maned horses, fiery fleet,
Then, climbing the rich car, with a great sound
Drive from the porch together, and reach the outer
ground.

[The Homeward Voyage of Telemachus.]—
(WORSLEY.)

Then did the men the shoreward lines undo;
Then did Telemachus his comrades cheer
To set the tackling. With good hearts the crew
Heard him, and soon made fast the goodly gear.
Safe in his place the pinewood mast they rear,
And brace the glittering sails on twisted hide.
Their bark Athené through the billowy mere
With rushing stormy-spirited breeze did guide.
Onward the dark swift keel cut steadily through the
tide.

THE ODYSSEY.

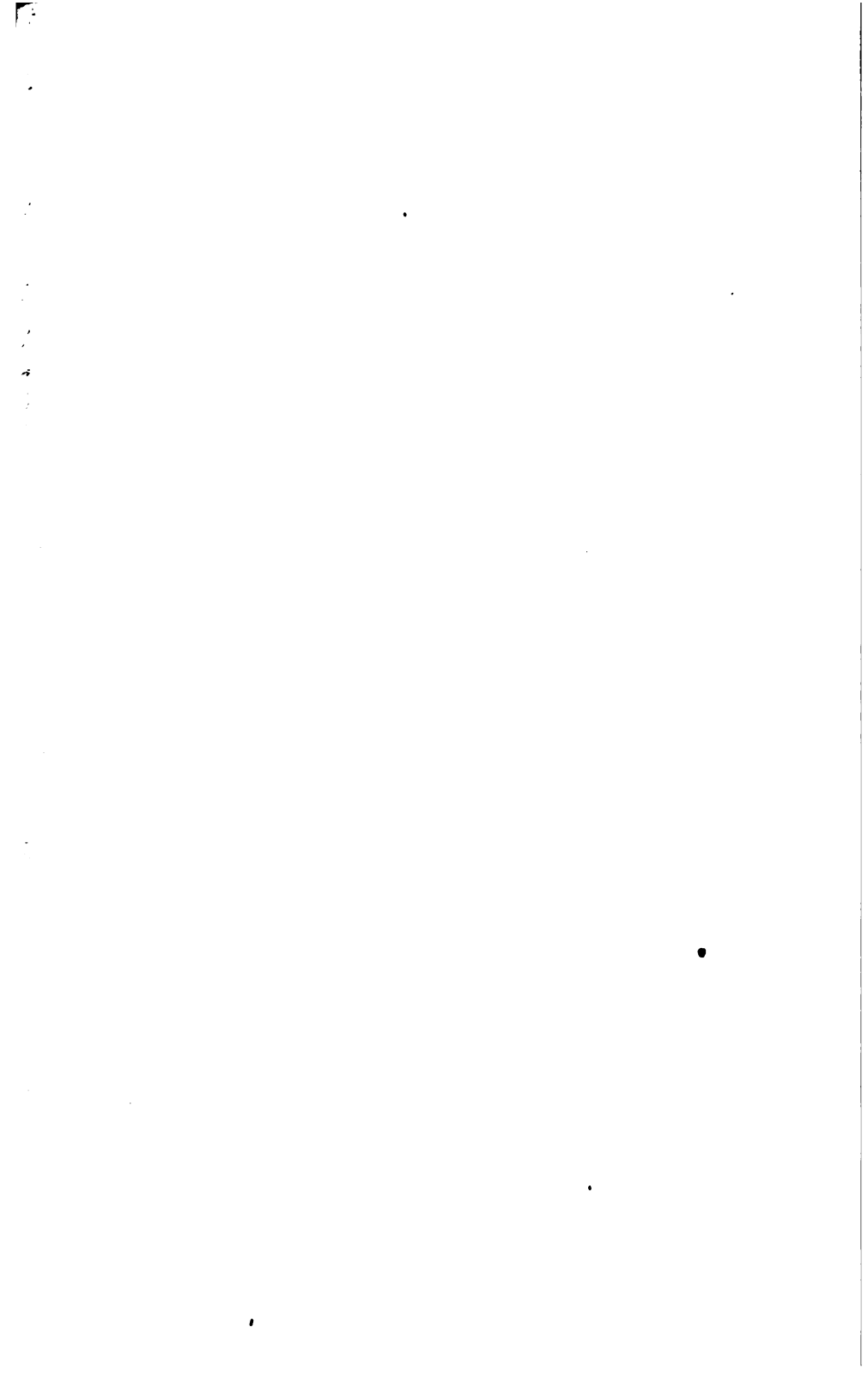
Down by the dark cliffs where the fountains play,
And Chalcis beautiful with streams, they sailed.
Deep in the dim west sank the orb of day,
And with the dusk shade earth and sea were veiled.
Swerveless and strong the wind of Zeus prevailed.
They through the night by glimmering Elis shot,
And now the spiry-pointed islands hailed.
Nor the brave prince the suitors' scheme forgot,
Wrung with dire doubt if yet he should be saved or not.

* * * *

* * * Quickly fair-throned Morning shone.
Now had Telemachus attained the isle.
His comrades furl the sails, the mast take down,
And to the harbor row the vessel on,
Cast anchor, tie the hawser, leap to land,
Eat food, drink wine. But when desire was gone,
Telemachus began: "Now ye, my band,
Ply forward to the town, and there the black ship
strand."

* * * All his men
Embarked. Telemachus his sandals fair
Linked deftly underneath his feet, and then
Grasped in his hand the great steel-pointed spear.
Soon they unmoor, and through the waters fare
Straight to the city, as Odysseus' son
Commanded. He with eager strides to where
Slept at the farm his myriad swine passed on,
Till of the loyal swineherd he the lodging won.

BOOK XVI



BOOK XVI: PART I

THE STORY

ULYSSES heard the steps of a man, and, as the dogs barked not, said to Eumæus, "Lo, there comes some comrade or friend, for the dogs bark not."

And as he spake, Telemachus stood in the doorway, and the swineherd let fall from his hand the bowl in which he was mixing wine, and ran to him and kissed his head and his eyes and his hands. As a father kisses his only son coming back to him from a far country after ten years, so did the swineherd kiss Telemachus. And when Telemachus came in, the false beggar, though indeed he was his father, rose, and would have given place to him; but Telemachus suffered him not. And when they had eaten and drunk, Telemachus asked of the swineherd who this stranger might be.

Then the swineherd told him as he had heard, and afterwards said, "I hand him to thee; he is thy suppliant: do as thou wilt."

But Telemachus answered, "Nay, Eumæus. For am I master in my house? Do not the suitors devour it? And does not my mother doubt whether she will abide with me, remembering the great Ulysses, who was her husband, or will follow some one of those who are suitors to her? I will give this stranger, indeed, food and clothing and a sword, and will send him whithersoever he will, but I would not that he should go among the suitors, so haughty are they and violent."

THE ODYSSEY.

Then said Ulysses, "But why dost thou bear with these men? Do the people hate thee, that thou canst not avenge thyself on them? and hast thou not kinsmen to help thee? As for me, I would rather die than see such shameful things done in house of mine."

And Telemachus answered, "My people hate me not; but as for kinsmen, I have none, for Acrisius had but one son, Laertes, and he again but one, Ulysses, and Ulysses had none other but me. Therefore do these men spoil my substance without let, and, it may be, will take my life also. These things, however, the gods will order. But do thou, Eumæus, go to Penelope, and tell her that I am returned, but let no man know thereof, for there are that counsel evil against me; but I will stay here meanwhile."

So Eumæus departed. But when he had gone Athené came, like a woman tall and fair; but Telemachus saw her not, for it is not given to all to see the immortal gods; but Ulysses saw her, and the dogs saw her, and whimpered for fear. She signed to Ulysses, and he went forth, and she said—

"Hide not the matter from thy son, but plan with him how ye may slay the suitors, and lo! I am with you."

Then she made his garments white and fair and his body lusty and strong, and his face swarthy, and his cheeks full, and his beard black. And when he was returned to the house, Telemachus marvelled to see him, and said—

"Thou art not what thou wast. Surely thou art some god from heaven."

But Ulysses made reply, "No god am I, only thy father, whom thou hast so desired to see."

And when Telemachus yet doubted, Ulysses told him how that Athené had so changed him. Then Telemachus threw his arms about him, weeping, and both

THE ODYSSEY.

went together for a while. And afterwards Telemachus asked him of his coming back. And Ulysses, when he had told him of this, asked him how many were the suitors, and whether they two could fight with them alone.

Then said Telemachus, "Thou art, I know, a great warrior, my father, and a wise, but this thing we cannot do; for these men are not ten, no, nor twice ten, but from Dulichium come fifty and two, and from Samos four and twenty, and from Zacynthus twenty, and from Ithaca twelve; and they have Medon the herald, and a minstrel also, and attendants."

Then said Ulysses, "Go thou home in the morning and mingle with the suitors, and I will come as an old beggar; and if they entreat me shamefully, endure to see it, yea, if they drag me to the door. Only, if thou wilt, speak to them prudent words; but they will not heed thee, for indeed their doom is near. Heed this also: when I give thee the token, take all the arms from the dwelling and hide them in thy chamber. And when they shall ask thee why thou doest thus, say that thou takest them out of the smoke, for that they are not such as Ulysses left behind him when he went to Troy, but that the smoke had soiled them. Say, also, that haply they might stir up strife sitting at their cups, and that it is not well that arms should be at hand, for that the very steel draws on a man to fight. But keep two swords and two spears and two shields—these shall be for thee and me. Only let no one know of my coming back—not Laertes, nor the swineherd, no, nor Penelopé herself."

But after a while the swineherd came back from the city, having carried his tidings to the queen. And this she also had heard from the sailors of the ships. Also the ship of the suitors which they had sent to lie in wait

THE ODYSSEY.

for the young man was returned. And the suitors were in great wrath and fear, because their purpose had failed, and also because Penelopé the queen knew what they had been minded to do, and hated them because of it.

BOOK XVI: PART II

THE POEM

[Telemachus Arrives at the Hut, and Encounters
His Father, Ulysses, Yet Unknown to Him.]
—(COWPER.)

IT was the hour of dawn, when in the cot
Kindling fresh fire, Ulysses and his friend
Noble Eumæus dress'd their morning fare,
And sent the herdsmen with the swine abroad.
Seeing Telemachus, the watchful dogs
Bark'd not, but fawn'd around him. At that sight,
And at the sound of feet which now approach'd,
Ulysses in wing'd accents thus remark'd:

"Eumæus! certain, either friend of thine
Is nigh at hand, of one whom well thou know'st;
Thy dogs bark not, but fawn on his approach
Obsequious, and the sound of feet I hear."

Scarce had he ceased, when his own son himself
Stood in the vestibule. Upsprang at once
Eumæus wonder-struck, and from his hand
Let fall the cups with which he was employ'd
Mingling rich wine; to his young Lord he ran,
His forehead kiss'd, kiss'd his bright-beaming eyes
And both his hands, weeping profuse the while.
As when a father holds in his embrace,
Arrived from foreign lands in the tenth year,
His darling son, the offspring of his age,
His only one, for whom he long hath mourn'd,

THE ODYSSEY.

So kiss'd the noble peasant o'er and o'er
Godlike Telemachus, as from death escaped.

* * * Eumæus at his hand received
His brazen lance, and o'er the step of stone
Enter'd Telemachus, to whom his sire
Relinquish'd, soon as he appear'd, his seat,
But him Telemachus forbidding, said:

"Guest, keep thy seat; our cottage will afford
Some other, which Eumæus will provide."

He ceased, and he, returning at the word,
Reposed again; then good Eumæus spread
Green twigs beneath, which, cover'd with a fleece,
Supplied Ulysses' offspring with a seat.
He next disposed his dishes on the board
With relics charged of yesterday; with bread
Alert, he heap'd the baskets; with rich wine
His ivy-cup replenish'd; and a seat
Took opposite to his illustrious Lord
Ulysses. They toward the plenteous feast
Stretch'd forth their hands (and hunger now and thirst
Both satisfied), Telemachus, his speech
Addressing to their generous host, began:

* * * * *
"Eumæus! haste, my father! bear with speed
News to Penelope that I am safe,
And have arrived from Pylus; I will wait
Till thou return; and well beware that none
Hear thee beside, for I have many foes."

[Ulysses, Transfigured by Pallas, Reveals Himself
in His True Semblance to Telemachus.]--
(WORSLEY.)

Thus did he urge the swineherd forth; and he,
Binding his sandals, hasten to depart,

THE ODYSSEY.

Not by Athené unbeheld. Then she
Like to a woman, at the door apart,
Fair, tall, and skilled in every splendid art,
Stood near them, only by Odysseus seen;
Nor could Telemachus with eyes or heart
At all discern her; since the gods, I ween,
Show not to all mankind their features, form, and mien.

But her Odysseus and the dogs descried,
Nor did they bark, but cowering with low whine
Slunk through the dwelling to the farther side.
She with her eyelids to the chief divine
Beckoned, and he forth issuing at the sign
Came, and she spake: "Odysseus, wise and great,
Hide from thy child no longer this design,
That for the ruthless guests within thy gate
Death ye may scheme together, and murder, and black
fate.

"The hour is come; devise your plans, and go
Hence to the far-famed city. Nor will I
Linger, myself on fire to meet the foe."
She spake, and lifting her gold wand on high
There touched him; and a robe washed beautifully
And a rich tunic round his breast appeared.
He in life's flower, arrayed in majesty,
Stood dark of mien, a warrior to be feared,
While round his manly chin curled shining the black
beard.

Thus passed the goddess, and he turning trod
The threshold; and his child, amazed in heart,
Blenched from the vision, lest it prove a god,
And spake in wingèd words: "O friend, thou art
Other than when thou didst of late depart.
Changed is thy raiment, nor thy flesh the same.

The Meeting of the 2nd and 3rd of the 2nd



THE ODYSSEY.

Across the sea, they landed me asleep
In Ithaca. Rich were the gifts they gave,—
Much brass and gold, and garments from the loom;
These, so the gods have counselled, lie concealed
Among the hollow rocks, and I am come,
Obeying Pallas, to consult with thee
How to destroy our enemies. Give now
The number of the suitors; let me know
How many there may be, and who they are,
That with a careful judgment I may weigh
The question whether we shall fall on them,—
We two alone,—or must we seek allies."

Then spake discreet Telemachus again:
"O father, I have heard of thy great fame
My whole life long,—how mighty is thy arm,
How wise thy counsels. Thou hast said great things
And I am thunderstruck. It cannot be
That two alone should stand before a crowd
Of valiant men. They are not merely ten,—
These suitors,—nor twice ten, but many more.
* * * Should we in the palace halls
Assault all these, I fear lest the revenge
For all thy wrongs would end most bitterly
And grievously for thee. Now, if thy thought
Be turned to some ally, bethink thee who
Will combat for us with a willing heart."

Again Ulysses, the great sufferer, spake:
"Then will I tell thee; listen, and give heed.
Think whether Pallas and her father, Jove,
Suffice not for us. Need we more allies?

* * * *

Not long will they avoid the fierce affray
When in my halls the strength of war is tried
Between me and the suitor crew. Now go
With early morning to thy home, and there
Mingle among the suitors. As for me,

THE ODYSSEY.

The swineherd afterward shall lead me hence
To town, a wretched beggar seemingly,
And very old. If there they scoff at me
In mine own palace, let thy faithful heart
Endure it, though I suffer; though they seize
My feet, and by them drag me to the door,
Or strike at me with weapon-blades, look on
And bear it; yet reprove with gentle words
Their folly. They will never heed reproof;
The day of their destruction is at hand.
And this I tell thee further, and be sure
To keep my words in memory. As soon
As Pallas, goddess of wise counsel, gives
The warning, I shall nod to thee, and thou,
When thou perceivest it, remove at once
All weapons from my halls to a recess
High in an upper chamber. With soft words
Quiet the suitors when they ask thee why.

* * * But leave

Two swords for us, two spears, two oxhide shields,
Against the day of combat. Pallas then,
And Jove the All-disposer, will unman
Their hearts. Moreover, let me say to thee—
And keep my words in memory—if thou be
My son, and of my blood, let no man hear
That now Ulysses is within the isle;
Let not Laërtes hear of it, nor him
Who keeps the swine, nor any of the train
Of servants, nor Penelope herself,
While thou and I alone search out and prove
The women of the household, and no less
The serving-men, to know who honors us,
And bears us reverence in his heart, and who
Contemns us, and dishonors even thee."

THE ODYSSEY.

[The Safe Return of Telemachus Being Told to
Queen Penelope, the Suitors Hear, and Are
Filled With Bitter Wrath.](—(WORSLEY.)

They in the hut conversing lingered thus.
Meantime the sailors, steering from the main
In the good ship which bore Telemachus
From Pylos, safely to the town attain.
So when at last the haven deep they gain,
Quickly they hale the black ship to the shore,
And with a good will the seafaring train
Take from the hollow bark her naval store.
Then to the house of Clytius the fair gifts they bore.

But to Odysseus' house the herald went,
Of her dear son to tell Penelope,
Both how he tarried and the bark had sent
Thus swiftly "lest the queen continually
Touched with a tender sorrow weep for me."
And lo! the herald and the swineherd met
On the same errand, and came speedily
Into the palace of the king to get
Their hearing; and his news the herald forth did set:

"O queen, thy dear son hath returned this day!"
And afterward the swineherd, standing near,
All things in order to the queen did say,
And then departed to his swine. But fear
Seized on the suitors at a word so drear.
Cold sank the heart within them; and they went
Sheer past the wall of the great court, and there,
Darkly debating on the dire event,
Held session by the gates in sore astonishment.

* * * *

Then first Eupheithes' child Antinoüs spake:
"How proof against all peril the gods keep

THE ODYSSEY.

This man! By day close sentry still we make,
And in relays along the windy steep
Watch, nor in dark night on the land we sleep,
But sail in ambush till the glimmering shine
Of dawn, to snare him in the secret deep.
Yet seemeth all the while some power divine
Wafted him home securely through the rolling brine.

"Come, let us scheme against him a sure death,
That he no longer to our loss rebel.
Never shall we, while he draws living breath,
Prosper, so far doth he in craft excel.
Nor do the people love us wholly well.
Haste, ere to council he the Achaians call;
For never will he cease from vengeance fell
Short of our ruin, but will teach them all
How we sheer death for him have woven to our fall."

* * * *

There he made pause, and in his place each one
Sat mute, and wondered what should come to pass:
And thus spake forth Amphinomus, the son
Of Nisus, child of lord Aretias,
Who from Dulichium, rich in corn and grass,
Crossed over, chief of the Dulichian clan.
He to Penelope right pleasing was
For worth of words, and a true-hearted man.
He now, their firm well-wisher, in the midst began:

"Friends, I for one were very loth to kill
Telemachus. To slay the royal seed
Is no light thing. But let us learn the will
Of Heaven, the doom by mighty Zeus decreed.
Then, if the oracles advise indeed
His downfall, I myself the work will dare
Right boldly, and the rest against him lead;

THE ODYSSEY.

But if the gods against our scheme declare,
Then in the face of Heaven I warn you to forbear."

[Penelope Bitterly Chides the Suitors for Plotting
the Death of Her Son.](—(BRYANT.)

He spake, and all approved. At once they rose,
And, entering the palace, sat them down
On shining thrones. Meantime Penelope
Had formed the purpose to appear before
The arrogant suitors, for the news was brought
Into her chamber of the plot to slay
Her son; the herald Medon overheard,
And told her all. So to the hall she went
With her attendant maids. The glorious dame
Drew near the suitor-train, and took her stand
Beside a column of the stately pile,
And with a delicate veil before her cheeks
Began to speak, and chid Antinoüs thus:—

"Antinoüs, mischief-plotter, insolent!
The rumor is that thou excellest all
Of thy own age among the Ithacans
In understanding and in speech. Yet such
Thou never wert. Ferocious as thou art,
Why seek the death of my Telemachus,
And treat with scorn the suppliants of whose prayer
Jove is the witness? An unholy thing
It is when men against their fellow-men
Plot mischief. Dost thou then forget that once
Thy father came to us a fugitive,
In terror of the people, who were wroth
Because he joined the Taphian pirate-race,
And plundered the Thesprotians, our allies.
The people would have slain him, and have torn
His heart out, and have pillaged his large wealth;
Ulysses checked their rage, and held them back,

THE ODYSSEY.

Fierce as they were. Now thou dost waste his goods
Most shamefully, and woo his wife, and slay
His son, and multiply my woes. Cease now,
I charge thee, and persuade the rest to cease."

* * * Then the queen went up
To the fair upper chambers, and there wept
Ulysses, her dear spouse, till o'er her lids
The blue-eyed Pallas poured the balm of sleep.

BOOK XVII

BOOK XVII: PART I

THE STORY

THE next day Telemachus went to the city. But before he went he said to Eumæus that he should bring the beggar-man to the city, for that it was better to beg in the city than in the country. And the false beggar also said that he wished this. And Telemachus, when he was arrived, went to the palace and greeted the nurse Euryclea and his mother Penelopé, who was right glad to see him, but to whom he told nought of what had happened. And after this he went to Piræus, and bade him keep the gifts which King Menelaüs had given him till he should be in peace in his own house, and if things should fall out otherwise, that he should keep them for himself. And then he went to fetch the seer Theoclymenus, that he might bring him to the palace. And the seer, when he was come thither, prophesied good concerning Ulysses, how that he would certainly return and take vengeance for all the wrong that had been done to him.

Now in the meanwhile Eumæus and the false beggar were coming to the city. And when they were now near to it, by the fountain which Ithacus and his brethren had made, where was also an altar of the Nymphs, Melanthius the goatherd met them, and spake evil to Eumæus, rebuking him that he brought this beggar to the city. And he came near and smote Ulysses with his foot on the thigh, but moved him not

THE ODYSSEY.

from the path. And Ulysses thought a while, should he smite him with his club and slay him, or dash him on the ground. But it seemed to him better to endure.

But Eumæus lifted up his hands and said, "Oh, now may the Nymphs of the fountain fulfil this hope, that Ulysses may come back to his home, and tear from thee this finery of thine, wherein thou comest to the city, leaving thy flock for evil shepherds to devour!"

So they went on to the palace. And at the door of the court there lay the dog Argus, whom in the old days Ulysses had reared with his own hand. But ere the dog grew to his full, Ulysses had sailed to Troy. And, while he was strong, men used him in the chase, hunting wild goats and roe-deer and hares. But now he lay on a dunghill, and the lice swarmed upon him. Well he knew his master, and, for that he could not come near to him, wagged his tail and drooped his ears.

And Ulysses, when he saw him, wiped away a tear, and said, "Surely this is strange, Eumæus, that such a dog, being of so fine a breed, should lie here upon a dunghill."

And Eumæus made reply, "He belongeth to a master who died far away. For indeed when Ulysses had him of old, he was the strongest and swiftest of dogs; but now my dear lord has perished far away, and the careless women tend him not. For when the master is away the slaves are careless of their duty. Surely a man, when he is made a slave, loses half the virtue of a man."

And as he spake the dog Argus died. Twenty years had he waited, and he saw his master at the last.

After this the two entered the hall. And Telemachus, when he saw them, took from the basket bread and meat, as much as his hands could hold, and bade carry them to the beggar, and also to tell him that he might go round among the suitors, asking alms. So he went,

THE ODYSSEY.

stretching out his hand, as though he were wont to beg; and some gave, having compassion upon him and marveling at him, and some asked who he was. But, of all, Antinoüs was the most shameless. For when Ulysses came to him and told him how he had had much riches and power in former days, and how he had gone to Egypt, and had been sold a slave into Cyprus, Antinoüs mocked him, saying—

“Get thee from my table, or thou shalt find a worse Egypt and a harder Cyprus than before.”

Then Ulysses said, “Surely thy soul is evil though thy body is fair; for though thou sittest at another man’s feast, yet wilt thou give me nothing.”

But Antinoüs, in great wrath, took the stool on which he sat and cast it at him, smiting his right shoulder. But Ulysses stirred not, but stood as a rock. But in his heart he thought on revenge. So he went and sat down at the door. And being there, he said—

“Hear me, suitors of the queen! There is no wrath if a man be smitten fighting for that which is his own, but Antinoüs has smitten me because that I am poor. May the curse of the hungry light on him therefor, ere he come to his marriage day.”

Also the other suitors blamed him that he had dealt so cruelly with this stranger. Also the queen was wroth when she heard it, as she sat in the upper chamber with her maidens about her.

BOOK XVII: PART II

THE POEM

[Telemachus Returns to the Palace, to the Joy of
His Mother, and the Ire of the Suitors.]—
(COWPER.)

NOW look'd Aurora from the East abroad,
When the illustrious offspring of divine
Ulysses bound his sandals to his feet;
He seized his sturdy spear match'd to his gripe,
And to the city meditating quick
Departure now, the swineherd thus bespake:

"Father! I seek the city to convince
My mother of my safe return, whose tears,
I judge, and lamentations shall not cease
Till her own eyes behold me." * * *

* * * Telemachus in haste
Set forth, his thoughts all teeming as he went,
With dire revenge. Soon in the palace-courts
Arriving, he reclined his spear against
A column and proceeded to the hall.
Him Euryclea first, his nurse, perceived,
While on the variegated seats she spread
Their fleecy covering; swift with tearful eyes
She flew to him, and the whole female train
Of brave Ulysses swarm'd around his son,
Clasping him, and his forehead and his neck
Kissing affectionate; then came herself,

THE ODYSSEY.

As golden Venus or Diana fair,
Forth from her chamber to her son's embrace,
The chaste Penelope; with tears she threw
Her arms around him, his bright-beaming eyes
And forehead kiss'd, and with a murmur'd plaint
Maternal in wing'd accents thus began:

"Thou hast return'd, light of my eyes! my son!
My loved Telemachus! I had no hope
To see thee more when once thou hadst embark'd
For Pylus, privily, and with no consent
From me obtain'd, news seeking of thy sire.
But haste; unfold. Declare what thou hast seen."

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
"Ah, mother! let my sorrows rest, nor me
From death so lately 'scaped afflict anew,
But, bathed and habited in fresh attire,
With all the maidens of thy train ascend
To thy superior chamber, there to vow
A perfect hecatomb to all the Gods,
When Jove shall have avenged our numerous wrongs."

* * * *

He spake, nor flew his words useless away.
She, bathed and habited in fresh attire,
Vow'd a full hecatomb to all the Gods,
Would Jove but recompense her numerous wrongs.
Then, spear in hand, went forth her son, two dogs
Fleet-footed following him. O'er all his form
Pallas diffused a dignity divine,
And every eye gazed on him as he pass'd.
The suitors throng'd him round, joy on their lips
And welcome, but deep mischief in their hearts.

THE ODYSSEY.

[Ulysses, in the Guise of a Beggar, Accompanied
by Eumæus, Come to the Palace and Are
Greeted by Telemachus.]—(POPE.)

Along the road, conversing side by side,
Proceed Ulysses and the faithful swain;
When thus Eumæus, generous and humane:
"To town, observant of our lord's behest,
Now let us speed; my friend, no more my guest!"

* * *
"Just thy advice" (the prudent chief rejoin'd),
"And such as suits the dictate of my mind.
Lead on; but help me to some staff to stay
My feeble step, since rugged is the way."

Across his shoulders then the scrip he flung,
Wide-patch'd, and fasten'd by a twisted thong.
A staff Eumæus gave. Along the way
Cheerily they fare: behind, the keepers stay;
These with their watchful dogs (a constant guard)
Supply his absence, and attend the herd,
And now his city strikes the monarch's eyes,
Alas! how changed! a man of miseries;
Propp'd on a staff, a beggar old and bare,
In rags dishonest fluttering with the air!

* * *
And now Telemachus, the first of all,
Observed Eumæus entering in the hall;
Distant he saw, across the shady dome;
Then gave a sign, and beckon'd him to come:
There stood an empty seat, where late was placed,
In order due, the steward of the feast,
(Who now was busied carving round the board),
Eumæus took, and placed it near his lord.
Before him instant was the banquet spread,
And the bright basket piled with loaves of bread.

THE ODYSSEY.

Next came Ulysses lowly at the door
A figure despicable, old, and poor.
In squalid vests, with many a gaping rent,
Propp'd on a staff, and trembling as he went.
Then, resting on a threshold of the gate,
Against a cypress pillar leaned his weight
(Smooth'd by the workman to a polish'd plane);
The thoughtful son beheld, and call'd his swain:

"These viands and this bread, Eumæus, bear,
And let yon mendicant our plenty share:
And let him circle round the suitors' board,
And try the bounty of each gracious lord.
Bold let him ask, encouraged thus by me;
How ill, alas! do want and shame agree!"

His lord's command the faithful servant bears;
The seeming beggar answers with his prayers:
"Bless'd be Telemachus! in every deed
Inspire him, Jove! in every wish succeed!"
This said, the portion from his son convey'd
With smiles receiving on his scrip he laid.

[Ulysses, Seemingly a Beggar, Asks Alms of the
Suitors, and Is Reviled and Threatened by
Antinoüs.]—(COWPER.)

* * * Minerva, drawing nigh
To Laertiades, impelled the Chief
Crusts to collect, or any pittance small
At every suitor's hand, for trial's sake
Of just and unjust; yet deliverance none
From evil she design'd for any there.
From left to right his progress he began
Petitioning, with outstretch'd hands, the throng,
As one familiar with the beggar's art.
They pitying gave to him, but view'd him still
With wonder, and enquiries mutual made

THE ODYSSEY.

Who, and whence was he? Then the goat-herd rose
Melanthius, and the assembly thus address'd:

"Hear me, ye suitors of the illustrious Queen!
This guest, of whom ye ask, I have beheld
Elsewhere; the swineherd brought him; but himself
I know not; neither who nor whence he is."

So he; then thus Antinoüs stern rebuked
The swineherd: "Ah, notorious as thou art,
Why hast thou shewn this vagabond the way
Into the city? Are we not enough
Infested with these troublers of our feasts?
Deem'st it a trifle that such numbers eat
At thy Lord's cost, and hast thou, therefore, led
This fellow hither, found we know not where?"

* * * *

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
"Antinoüs! as a father for his son
Takes thought, so thou for me, who bidd'st me chase
The stranger harshly hence; but God forbid!
Impart to him. I grudge not, but myself
Exhort thee to it; neither, in this cause,
Fear thou the Queen. * * *
* * * Ah! within thy breast
Dwells no such thought; thou lovest not to impart
To others, but to gratify thyself."

To whom Antinoüs answer thus return'd:
"High-soaring and intemperate in thy speech,
How hast thou said, Telemachus? Would all
As much bestow on him, he should not seek
Admittance here again three months to come."

So saying, he seized the stool which, banquetting,
He press'd with his nice feet, and from beneath
The table forth advanced it into view.
The rest all gave to him, with bread and flesh

THE ODYSSEY.

Filling his wallet, and Ulysses, now,
Returning to his threshold, there to taste
The bounty of the Greeks, paused in his way
Beside Antinoüs, whom he thus address'd:

"Kind sir, vouchsafe to me! for thou appear'st
Not least, but greatest of the Achaïans here,
And hast a kingly look. It might become
Thee therefore above others to bestow,
So should I praise thee whereso'er I roam."

* * * *

Then answer thus Antinoüs harsh return'd:

[Antinoüs Cursing the Seeming Beggar, Smites
the Disguised King a Great Blow.](—(WORS-
LEY.)

"Curse on thee, wretch, who dost our feast defile!
Stand from my table, lest thou chance to find
Sharp Egypt and a bitter Cyprus isle.
Soothly thou art to no weak shame inclined,
But for a beggar hast a brazen mind.
Thou, standing near, dost still to each appeal,
And much they give thee, very idly kind.
Light is their reckoning, no remorse they feel,
Food not their own to lavish from so brave a meal."

Backward Odysseus stept, and thus replied:

"Thy mind and body are of diverse make.

Scarce from thine own house wouldst thou salt pro-
vide

For suppiants, who for me no bread wilt break
Where ye rich feast at others' cost partake."

He ceased. Antinoüs, wrung with wrath, apace

Turned on him scowling, and in winged words spake:

"Now shalt thou not go scatheless to thy place,
Since thou dost speak vain words, and beard me to
my face."

THE ODYSSEY.

So did he speak, and, in his foolish heart
Conceiving fury, he the stool uptore,
And smote him near the spine's extremest part,
On the right shoulder. He the great blow bore
Firm as a rock, and on the palace-floor
Blenched not at all, but silent waved his head,
And brooded evil things; then to the door
Passed, carrying in his hands the meat and bread;
There the foul scrip laid down, and to the suitors said:

"Hear me, ye suitors of the queen divinest
Men grieve not for the wounds they take in fight,
Defending their own wealth, white sheep or kine;
But me (bear witness!) doth Antinoüs smite
Only because I suffer hunger's bite,
Fount to mankind of evils evermore.
Now may Antinoüs, ere his nuptial night,
If there be gods and furies of the poor,
Die unavenged, unwept, upon the palace-floor!"

Answered the proud Antinoüs: "Sit and eat
In peace, O stranger, or with speed begone,
Lest the men drag thee by the hands and feet,
And strip thy flesh, and peel thee to the bone,
So dire a word thy caitiff lips hath flown."
Thus did he speak, and all exceedingly
Disdained the fierce wrongs to the poor man shown;
And, while the murmur of their wrath grew high,
One of the haughty youths did in these words reply:

"Not to thine honor hast thou now let fall,
Antinoüs, on the wandering poor this blow.
Haply a god from heaven is in our hall,
And thou art ripe for ruin: I bid thee know,
Gods in the garb of strangers to and fro
Wander the cities, and men's ways discern;

THE ODYSSEY.

Yea, through the wide earth in all shapes they go,
Changed, yet the same, and with their own eyes learn
How live the sacred laws, who hold them, and who
spurn."

Thus spake the suitors. He within his heart
Lightly regarded and not seemed to hear.
Meanwhile Telemachus sat far apart,
Feeding on fire; and deeper and more drear
Grew the sharp pang, that he saw stricken there
His own dear father, and the flower of kings.
Yet from his eyelids he left fall no tear,
But, filled in soul with dark imaginings,
Silently waved his head, and brooded evil things.

[Penelope Sends for the Stranger, to Ask If Per-
chance He Knows Aught of Ulysses.]—
(BRYANT.)

Meantime the sage Penelope
Heard of the stranger smitten in her halls,
And thus bespake the maidens of her train:—
"Would that Apollo, mighty with the bow,
Might smite thee also!" Then Eurynomè,
The matron of the household, said in turn:
"O, were our prayers but heard, not one of these
Should look upon the golden morn again!"

Then spake again the sage Penelope:
"Mother, they all are hateful; every one
Plots mischief, but Antinoüs most of all;
And he is like black death, to be abhorred.
A friendless stranger passes through these halls,
Compelled by need, and asks an alms of each,
And all the others give, and fill his scrip;
Antinoüs flings a footstool, and the blow
Bruises the shoulder of the suppliant man."

THE ODYSSEY.

So talked they with each other where they sat
In the queen's chamber, 'mid the attendant train
Of women, while meantime Ulysses took
The evening meal. The queen then bade to call
The noble swineherd, and bespake him thus:—

"My worthy friend Eumæus, go and bring
The stranger hither. I would speak with him,
And ask if anywhere he saw or heard
Aught of Ulysses; for he seems like one
Whose wanderings have been in many lands."

* * * *

She spake, the swineherd went, and, drawing near
Ulysses, said to him in winged words:—

"Stranger and father, sage Penelope,
The mother of the prince, hath sent for thee.
Though sorrowing, she is minded to inquire
What of her husband thou canst haply say;
And should she find that all thy words are true,
She will bestow a tunic and a cloak,
Garments which much thou needest. For thy food,
What will appease thy hunger thou wilt find
Among the people; ask, and each will give."

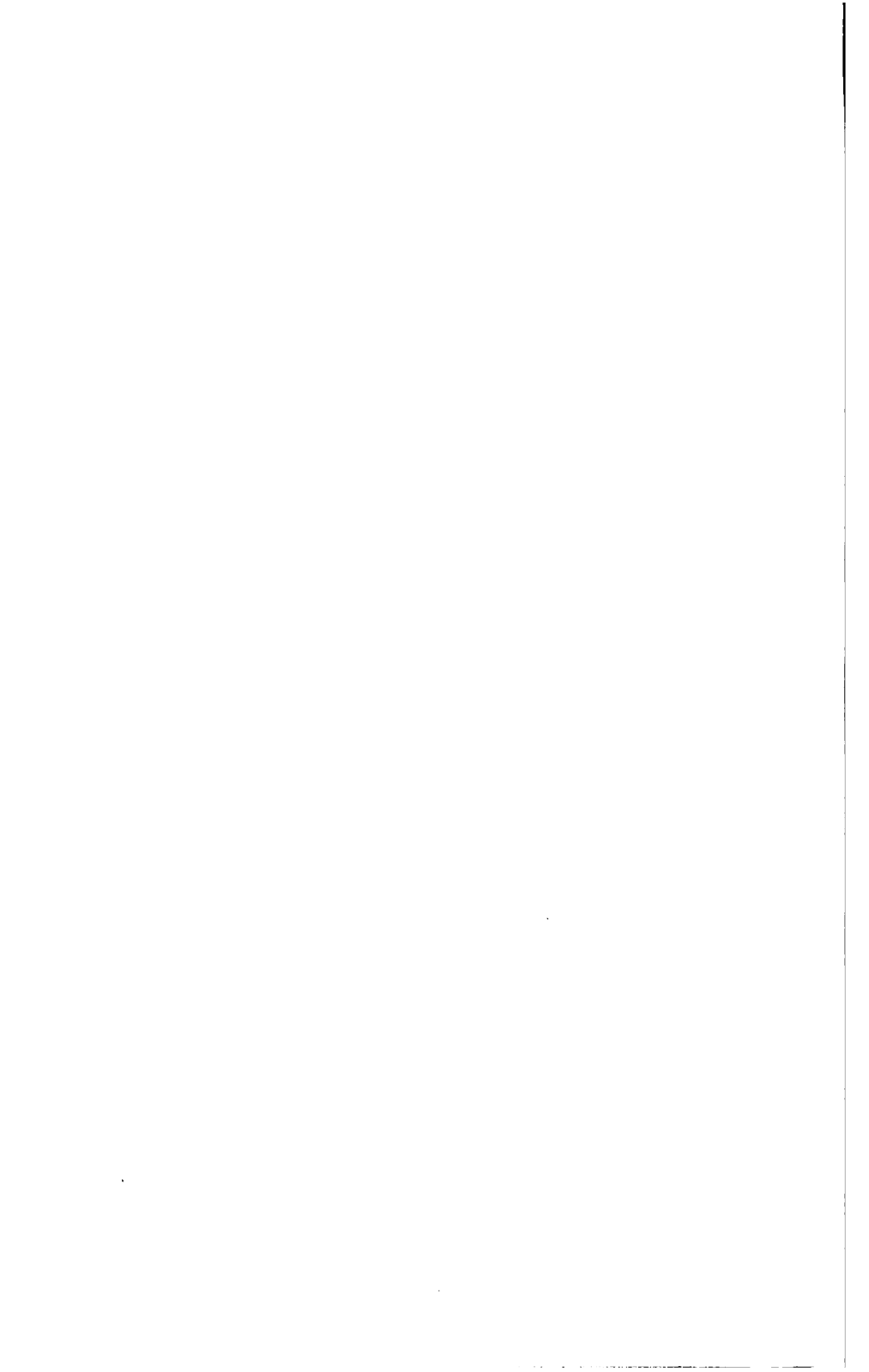
Ulysses, much-enduring man, replied:

"Eumæus, faithfully will I declare
All that I know to sage Penelope,
The daughter of Icarius. Well I knew
Her husband, and with like calamities
We both have suffered. But I greatly dread
This reckless suitor-crew, whose riotous acts
And violence reach to the iron heavens.
Even now, when that man dealt me, as I passed,
A painful blow, though I had done no harm,
None interposed, not even Telemachus,
In my defence. Now, therefore, ask, I pray,
Penelope that she will deign to wait
Till sunset in her rooms, though strong her wish

THE ODYSSEY.

To hear my history. Of her husband then,
And his return, she may inquire, while I
Sit by the blazing hearth; for scant have been
My garments, as thou knowest, since the day
When first I came, a suppliant, to thy door."

BOOK XVIII



BOOK XVIII: PART I

THE STORY

BUT as the day passed on there came a beggar from the city, huge of bulk, mighty to eat and drink, but his strength was not according to his size. Arnæus was his name, but the young men called him Irus, because he was their messenger, after Iris, the messenger of Zeus. He spake to Ulysses—

"Give place, old man, lest I drag thee forth; the young men even now would have it so, but I think it shame to strike such an one as thee."

Then said Ulysses, "There is room for thee and for me; get what thou canst, for I do not grudge thee aught, but beware lest thou anger me, lest I harm thee, old though I am."

But Irus would not hear words of peace, but still challenged him to fight.

And when Antinoüs saw this he was glad, and said, "This is the goodliest sport that I have seen in this house. These two beggars would fight; let us haste and match them."

And the saying pleased them; and Antinoüs spake again: "Hear me, ye suitors of the queen! We have put aside these paunches of the goats for our supper. Let us agree then that whosoever of these two shall prevail, shall have choice of these, that which pleaseth him best, and shall hereafter eat with us, and that no one else shall sit in his place."

THE ODYSSEY.

Then said Ulysses, "It is hard for an old man to fight with a young. Yet will I do it. Only do ye swear to me that no one shall strike me a foul blow while I fight with this man."

Then Telemachus said that this should be so and they all consented to his words. And after this Ulysses girded himself for the fight. And all that were there saw his thighs, how great and strong they were, and his shoulders, how broad, and his arms, how mighty. And they said one to another, "There will be little of Irus left, so stalwart seems this beggar-man." But as for Irus himself, he would have slunk out of sight, but they that were set to gird him compelled him to come forth.

Then said the Prince Antinoüs, "How is this, thou braggart, that thou fearest this old man, all woe-begone as he is? Hearken thou to this. If this man prevails against thee, thou shalt be cast into a ship and taken to the land of King Echetus, who will cut off thy ears and thy nose for his dogs to eat."

So the two came together. And Ulysses thought whether he should strike the fellow and slay him out of hand, or fell him to the ground. And this last seemed the better of the two. So when Irus had dealt his blow, he smote him on the jaw, and brake in the bone, so that he fell howling on the ground, and the blood poured amain from his mouth.

Then all the suitors laughed aloud. But Ulysses dragged him out of the hall, and propped him by the wall of the courtyard, putting a staff in his hand, and saying, "Sit there, and keep dogs and swine from the door, but dare not hereafter to lord it over men, lest some worse thing befall thee."

Then Antinoüs gave him a great paunch, and Amphinomus gave two loaves, and pledged him in a cup,

THE ODYSSEY.

saying, "Good luck to thee, father, hereafter, though now thou seemest to have evil fortune."

And Ulysses made reply, "O Amphinomus, thou hast much wisdom, methinks, and thy father I know, is wise. Take heed, therefore. There is nought feebler upon earth than man. For in the days of his prosperity he thinketh nothing of trouble, but when the gods send evil to him there is no help in him. I also trusted once in myself and my kinsmen, and now—behold me what I am! Let no man, therefore, do violence and wrong, for Zeus shall requite such deeds at the last. And now these suitors of the queen are working evil to him who is absent. Yet will he return some day and slay his enemies. Fly thou, therefore, while yet there is time, nor meet him when he comes."

So he spake, with kindly thought.

But his doom was on Amphiromus that he should die.

BOOK XVIII: PART II

THE POEM

[Irus the Beggar Reviles Ulysses, and the Suitors,
for Sport, Incite Them to Blows.](BRY-
ANT.)

THERE came a common beggar, wont to ask
Alms through the town of Ithaca, well known
For greediness of stomach, gluttonous
And a wine-bibber, but of little strength
And courage, though he seemed of powerful mould.
Arnæus was the name which at his birth
His mother gave him, but the young men called
The fellow Irus, for it was his wont
To go on errands, as a messenger,
When he was ordered. Coming now, he thought
To drive Ulysses out of his own house,
And railed at him, and said in winged words:—

“Hence with thee! leave the porch, old man, at once,
Lest thou be taken by the foot and dragged
Away from it. Dost thou not see how all
Around us nod, to bid me drag thee out?
I am ashamed to do it. Rise and go,
Else haply we may have a strife of blows.”

Ulysses, the sagacious, frowned, and said:
“Wretch! there is nothing that I do or say
To harm thee aught. I do not envy thee

THE ODYSSEY.

What others give thee, though the dole be large;
And ample is this threshold for us both.
Nor shouldst thou envy others, for thou seemest
A straggler like myself. The gods bestow
Wealth where they list. But do not challenge me
To blows, lest, aged as I am, thou rouse
My anger, and I make thy breast and lips
Hideous with blood." * * *

The beggar Irus angrily rejoined:
"Ye gods! this glutton prattles volubly,
Like an old woman at the chimney-side.
Yet could I do him mischief, smiting him
On both his sides, and dashing from his cheeks
The teeth to earth, as men are wont to deal
With swine that eat the wheat. Now gird thyself,
Let these men see us fighting. How canst thou
Think to contend with one so young as I?"

Thus fiercely did they wrangle as they stood
Beside the polished threshold and before
The lofty gates. The stout Antinous heard,
And, laughing heartily, bespake the rest:—

"Here, friends, is what we never yet have had.
Behold the pleasant pastime which the gods
Provide for us. These men—the stranger here,
And Irus—quarrel, and will come to blows.
Let us stand by and bring the combat on."

* * * *

He spake, and all approved. Ulysses drew
And girt his tatters round his waist and showed
His large and shapely thighs. Unclothed appeared
His full broad shoulders, and his manly breast
And sinewy arms. Minerva stood by him,
And with a mighty breadth of limb endued
The shepherd of the people. Earnestly

THE ODYSSEY.

The suitors gazed, and wondered at the sight,
And each one, turning to his neighbor, said:—

“Irus, poor Irus, on himself has drawn
An evil fate, for what a sinewy thigh
His adversary shows beneath his rags!”

So talked they, while the heart of Irus sank
Within him; yet the attendants girding him
Forcibly drew him forward, sore afraid,
The muscles quivering over every limb.

[With One Mighty Blow, Ulysses Smites the
Braggart Helpless.](—(WORSLEY.)

Then brave Odysseus in his soul discussed,
Whether to beat him to the bloody dust
Dead, or to strike him with a softer blow
Prone, yet alive, the scorn and fell disgust
Of all men. At the last seemed wiser so—
Softly to strike, lest him too soon the Achaians know.

They standing, Irus smote Odysseus there
On the right shoulder. He with a dire clang
Smote Irus on the neck, beneath the ear,
And crashed the splintering bone. Out the blood
sprang

Red from the mouth in jets, and the earth rang
Loud to the ruining mass. He writhingly
Kicked in convulsion, and with hideous pang
Gnashed his teeth, moaning ever; and standing by
The suitors raised their hands, and laughed as they
would die.

Him through the vestibule Odysseus drew
Forth to the courtyard by the heel, and there
Propped him against the wall in public view,
And planted in his hands a staff to bear,

THE ODYSSEY.

And did aloud in wingèd words declare:
"Sit, pitiful that thou art, and learn to keep
Dogs from the doors and swine, nor henceforth dare
O'er men to lord it, and foul insults heap
On strangers and the poor, lest a worse thing thou
reap."

[The Suitors Rail at Ulysses, and Eurymachus
Aims a Blow at Him With a Footstool.]---
(BRYANT.)

But Pallas suffered not the suitors yet
To cease from railing speeches, all the more
To wound the spirit of Laërtes' son.
Eurymachus, the son of Polybus,
Began to scoff at him, and thus he spake
To wake the ready laughter of the rest:—

"Hear me, ye suitors of the illustrious queen,
I speak the thought that comes into my mind.
Led by some god, no doubt, this man has come
Into the palace; for the light we have
Of torches seems to issue from the crown
Of his bald pate, a head without a hair."

* * * *

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered thus:—
"Should Jove, the son of Saturn, send to-day
War from abroad, and I had but a shield,
Two spears, and, fitted to my brows, a helm
Of brass, thou wouldst behold me pressing on
Among the foremost warriors, and would see
No cause to rail at my keen appetite.
But arrogantly thou dost bear thyself,
And pitilessly; thou in thine own eyes
Art great and mighty, since thou dost consort

THE ODYSSEY.

With few, and those are not the best of men.
Yet should Ulysses come to his own land,
These gates that seem so wide would suddenly
Become too narrow for thee in thy flight."

He spake. Eurymachus grew yet more wroth,
And frowned on him, and said in winged words:—

"Wretch! I shall do thee mischief. Thou art bold,
And babblest unabashed among us all.
The wine, perhaps, is in thy foolish head,
Or thou art always thus, and ever prone
To prattle impudently. Art thou proud
Of conquering Irus, that poor vagabond?"

This having said, he brandished in the air
A footstool; but Ulysses, to escape
The anger of Eurymachus, sat down
Before the knees of the Dulichian prince,
Amphinomus. The footstool flew, and struck
On the right arm the cupbearer. Down fell
The beaker ringing; he who bore it lay
Stretched in the dust. Then in those shadowy halls
The suitors rose in tumult. One of them
Looked at another by his side, and said:—

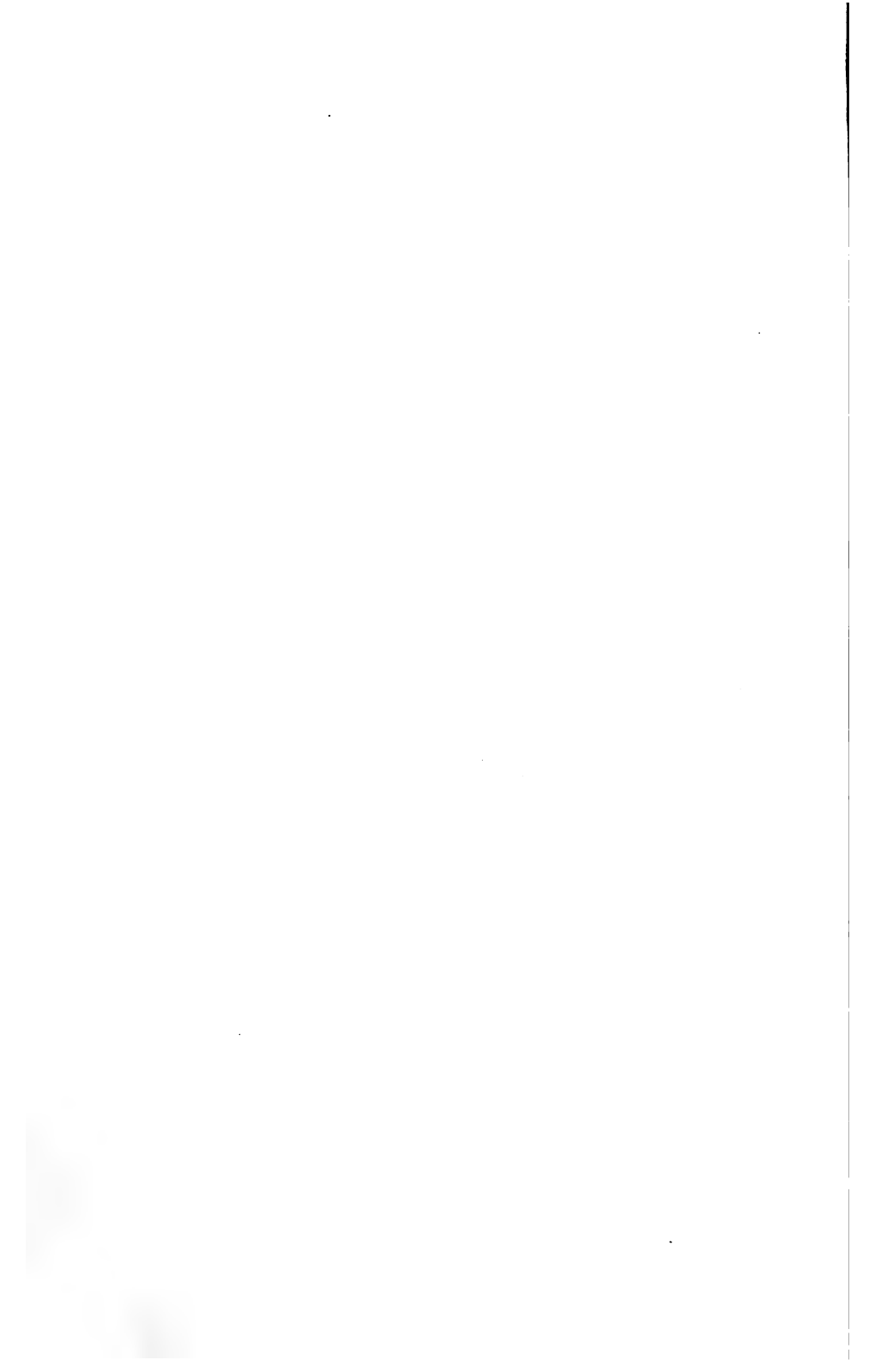
"Would that this vagabond had met his death
Ere he came hither. This confusion, then,
Had never been. 'Tis for a beggar's sake
We wrangle, and the feast will henceforth give
No pleasure; we shall go from bad to worse."

Then rose in majesty Telemachus,
And said: "Ye are not in your senses sure,
Unhappy men, who cannot eat and drink
In peace. Some deity, no doubt, has moved
Your minds to frenzy. Now, when each of you
Has feasted well, let each withdraw to sleep,
Just when he will. I drive no man away:"

THE ODYSSEY.

He spake; the suitors heard, and bit their lips,
And wondered at Telemachus, who spake
So resolutely.

* * * And when the wine was poured,
And they had drunk what each desired, they went
Homeward to slumber, each in his abode.



BOOK XIX

BOOK XIX: PART I

THE STORY

AND that evening, the suitors having departed to their own dwellings, Ulysses and Telemachus took the arms from the hall, as they had also planned to do. And while they did so Telemachus said, "See, my father, this marvelous brightness that is on the pillars and the ceiling. Surely some god is with us."

And Ulysses made reply, "I know it: be silent. And now go to thy chamber and sleep, and leave me here, for I have somewhat to say to thy mother and her maidens."

And when the queen and her maidens came into the hall (for it was their work to cleanse it and make it ready for the morrow) Penelopé asked him of his family and his country. And at first he made as though he would not answer, fearing, he said, lest he should trouble her with the story of that which he had suffered. But afterwards, for she urged him, telling him what she herself had suffered, her husband being lost and her suitors troubling her without ceasing, he feigned a tale that should satisfy her. For he told her how that he was a man of Crete, a brother of King Idomeneus, and how he had given hospitality to Ulysses, what time he was sailing to Troy with the sons of Atreus.

And when the queen, seeking to know whether he spake the truth, asked him of Ulysses what manner

THE ODYSSEY

of man he was, and with what clothing he was clothed, he answered her rightly saying, "I remember me that he had a mantle, twofold, woollen, of sea-purple clasped with a brooch of gold, whereon was a dog that held a fawn by the throat; marvelously wrought they were, so hard held the one, so strove the other to be free. Also he had a tunic, white and smooth, which the women much admired to see. But whether some one had given him these things I know not, for indeed many gave him gifts, and I also, even a sword and tunic. Also he had a herald with him, one Eurybates, older than him, darkskinned, round in the shoulders, with curly hair."

And Penelopé, knowing these things to be true, wept aloud, crying that she should see her husband no more. But the false beggar comforted her, saying that Ulysses was in the land of the Thresprotians, having much wealth with him, only that he had lost his ships and his comrades, yet nevertheless would speedily return.

Then Penelopé bade her servants make ready a bed for the stranger of soft mats and blankets, and also that one of them should bathe him. But the mats and blankets he would not have, saying that he would sleep as before; and for the bathing, he would only that some old woman, wise and prudent, should do this. Wherefore the queen bade Euryclea, the keeper of the house, do this thing for him, for that he had been the comrade of her lord, and indeed was marvelously like to him in feet and hands.

And this the old woman was right willing to do, for love for her master, "for never," she said, "of all strangers that had come to the land, had come one so like to him." But when she had prepared the bath for his feet, Ulysses sat by the fire, but as far in the shadow as he might, lest the old woman should see a great scar that was upon his leg, and know him thereby.

THE ODYSSEY.

Now the scar had chanced in this wise. He had come to see his grandfather Autolycus, who was the most cunning of men, claiming certain gifts which he had promised to him in the old days when, being then newly born, he was set on his grandfather's knees in the halls of Laertes, and his grandfather had given him this name. And on the day of his coming there was a great feast, and on the day after a hunting on Mount Parnassus. In this hunting, therefore, Ulysses came in the heart of a wood upon a place where lay a great wild boar, and the beast, being stirred by the noise, rose up, and Ulysses charged him with his spear, but before he could slay the beast it ripped a great wound just above the knee. And afterwards, Ulysses slew it, and the young men bound up the wound, singing a charm to staunch the blood.

By this scar, then, the old nurse knew that it was Ulysses himself, and said, "O Ulysses, O my child, to think that I knew thee not!"

And she looked towards the queen, as meaning to tell the thing to her. But Ulysses laid his hand on her throat, "Mother, wouldst thou kill me? I am returned after twenty years; and none must know till I shall be ready to take vengeance."

And the old woman held her peace. And after this Penelopé talked with him again, telling him her dreams, how she had seen a flock of geese in her palace, and how that an eagle had slain them, and when she mourned for the geese, lo! a voice that said, "These geese are thy suitors, and the eagle thy husband."

And Ulysses said that the dream was well. And then she said that on the morrow she must make her choice, for that she had promised to bring forth the great bow that was Ulysses', and whosoever should draw it most easily, and shoot an arrow best at a mark, he should be her husband.

THE ODYSSEY.

And the stranger guest said to the queen: "Put not off this trial of the bow, for before one of them shall draw the string the great Ulysses shall come and duly shoot at the mark that shall be set."

After this Penelopé slept, but Ulysses watched.

BOOK XIX: PART II

THE POEM

Ulysses and Telemachus, Making Ready to Attack the Suitors, Remove All Arms From the Hall.]—(BRYANT.)

NOW was the godlike chief Ulysses left
In his own palace, planning, with the aid
Of Pallas, to destroy the suitor-train,
And thus bespake his son with winged words:—

"Now is the time, Telemachus, to take
The weapons that are here, and store them up
In the inner rooms. Then, if the suitors ask
The reason, answer them with specious words:
Say, 'I have put them where there comes no smoke,
Since even now they do not seem the arms
Left by Ulysses when he sailed for Troy,
So tarnished are they by the breath of fire.'"

* * * *

Ulysses and his glorious son in haste
Bore off the helmets, and the bossy shields,
And the sharp spears, while Pallas held to them
A golden lamp, that shed a fair clear light.
Then to his father spake Telemachus:—

"Father! my eyes behold a marvel. All
The palace walls, each beautiful recess,

THE ODYSSEY.

The fir-tree beams, the aspiring columns, shine,
Before my eyes, as with a blaze of fire.
Some god is surely here, some one of those
Who make their dwelling in the high broad heaven."

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered thus:
"Keep silence; give thy thought no speech, nor ask
Concerning aught. Such is the wont of those
Who dwell upon Olympus. Now withdraw
To rest upon thy couch, while I remain,
For I would move thy mother and her maids
To ask of what concerns me. She, I deem,
Full sadly will inquire of many things."

He spake; Telemachus departed thence,
By torchlight, to his chamber, there to rest
Where he was wont to lie when gentle sleep
Came over him. There lay he down to wait
The hallowed morning, while Ulysses, left
Within the palace, meditated still
Death to the suitors with Minerva's aid.

[Queen Penelope, Seeking from the Stranger
Tidings of Ulysses, Relates the Stratagem by
Which She Balked the Suitors, Hoping Her
Husband's Return.](—COWPER.)

At length, Diana-like, or like herself,
Enter'd Penelope. Beside the hearth
Her women planted her accustom'd seat
With silver wreathed and ivory. That throne
Icmalius made, artist renown'd, and join'd
A footstool to its splendid frame beneath,
Which ever with an ample fleece they spread,
There sat discreet Penelope; then came
Her beautiful attendants from within,
Who clear'd the litter'd bread, the board, and cups
From which the insolent companions drank.

THE ODYSSEY.

They also raked the embers from the hearths
Now dim, and with fresh billets piled them high,
Both for illumination and for warmth.

* * * *

Then to her household's governess she said:
"Bring now a seat, and spread it with a fleece,
Eurynome! that, undisturb'd, the guest
May hear and answer all that I shall ask."

She ended. Then the matron brought in haste
A polish'd seat, and spread it with a fleece,
On which the toil-accustom'd hero sat,
And thus the chaste Penelope began:

"Stranger! my first enquiry shall be this—
Who art thou? Whence? where born, and sprung
from whom?"

Then answer thus Ulysses, wise, return'd:
"O Queen! uncensurable by the lips
Of mortal man! thy glory climbs the skies
Unrivall'd, like the praise of some great King. * * *
* * * Question of what else thou wilt
In thy own palace, but forbear to ask
From whom I sprang, and of my native land,
Lest thou, reminding me of those sad themes,
Augment my woes; for I have much endured;
Nor were it seemly, in another's house,
To pass the hours in sorrow and in tears,
Wearisome when indulged with no regard
To time or place; thy train (perchance thyself)
Would blame me, and I should reproach incur,
As one tear-deluged through excess of wine."

Him answered then Penelope discreet:
"The immortal Gods, O stranger, then destroy'd
My form, my grace, my beauty, when the Greeks
Whom my Ulysses follow'd, sail'd to Troy. * * *
But I am wretched now, such storms of woe

THE ODYSSEY.

The Gods have sent me; for as many Chiefs
As hold dominion in the neighbor isles * * *
Woo ceaseless, and my household stores consume.
I, therefore, neither guest nor suppliant heed,
Nor public herald more, but with regret
Of my Ulysses wear my soul away.
They, meantime, press my nuptials, which by art
I still procrastinate. Some God the thought
Suggested to me, to commence a robe
Of amplest measure and of subtlest woof,
Laborious task; which done, I thus address'd them:
"Princes, my suitors! since the noble Chief
Ulysses is no more, enforce not now
My nuptials; wait till I shall finish first
A funeral robe (lest all my threads be marr'd),
Which for the ancient hero I prepare
Laërtes, looking for the mournful hour
When fate shall snatch him to eternal rest.
Else, I the censure dread of all my sex,
Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud."
Such was my speech; they, unsuspecting all,
With my request complied. Thenceforth, all day
I wove the ample web, and, by the aid
Of torches, ravell'd it again at night.
Three years by artifice I thus their suit
Eluded safe; but when the fourth arrived,
And the same season after many moons
And fleeting days return'd, passing my train
Who had neglected to release the dogs,
They came surprised, and reprimanded me.
Thus, through necessity, not choice, at last
I have perform'd it, in my own despite.
But no escape from marriage now remains,
Nor other subterfuge for me; meantime
My parents urge my nuptials, and my son
(Of age to note it) with disgust observes

THE ODYSSEY.

His wealth consumed; for he is now become
Adult, and abler than myself to rule
The house, a Prince distinguish'd by the Gods.
Yet, stranger, after all, speak thy descent;
Say whence thou art; for not of fabulous birth,
Art thou, nor from the oak, nor from the rock."

[The Seeming Beggar Tells Penelope How Ulysses Was Once His Guest.](—COWPER.)

Her answer'd, then, Ulysses, ever-wise:
"O spouse revered of Laërtiades!
Resolvest thou still to learn from whom I sprang?
Learn then; but know that thou shalt much augment
My present grief, natural to a man
Who hath, like me, long exiled from his home
Through various cities of the sons of men
Wander'd remote, and numerous woes endured.
Yet, though it pain me, I will tell thee all.

There is a land amid the sable flood
Call'd Crete; fair, fruitful, circled by the sea.
Numerous are her inhabitants, a race
Not to be summ'd, and ninety towns she boasts.

* * * Deucalion's sons
Were two, myself and King Idomeneus.
To Ilium he, on board his gallant barks
Follow'd the Atridæ. I, the youngest-born,
By my illustrious name, Æthon, am known,
But he ranks foremost both in worth and years.
There I beheld Ulysses, and within
My walls received him; for a violent wind
Had driven him from Malea (while he sought
The shores of Troy) to Crete * * *
Him therefore I conducted to my home,
Where hospitably, and with kindest care,
I entertain'd him (for I wanted nought),

THE ODYSSEY.

And for himself procured and for his band,
By public contribution, corn, and wine,
And beeves for food, that all might be sufficed.
Twelve days his noble Grecians there abode,
Port-lock'd by Boreas blowing with a force
Resistless even on the land, some God
So roused his fury; but the thirteenth day
The wind all fell, and they embark'd again."

[Queen Penelope, Doubting the Stranger, Questions Him of Ulysses' Appearance.](BRYANT.)

Thus went he on, inventing tales that seemed
Like truth. She listened, melting into tears
That flowed as when on mountain height the snow,
Shed by the west-wind, feels the east-wind's breath,
And flows in water, and the hurrying streams
Are filled; so did Penelope's fair cheeks
Seem to dissolve in tears,—tears shed for him
Who sat beside her even then. He saw
His weeping wife, and pitied her at heart;
Yet were his eyes like iron or like horn,
And moved not in their lids; for artfully
He kept his tears from falling. When the queen
Had ceased to weep, she answered him and said:—

"Now, stranger, let me prove thee, if in truth
Thou didst receive, as thou hast just declared,
In thine abode, my husband and his train
Of noble friends. Describe the garb he wore;
How looked he, and the friends he brought with him?"

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered her:
"O lady, hard it is to answer thee,
So long have I been far away from home.
'Tis now the twentieth year since he was there
And left the isle, but, as my memory bids,

THE ODYSSEY.

So will I speak. A fleecy purple cloak
Ulysses wore, a double web; the clasp
Was golden, with two fastenings, and in front
It showed a work of rare design,—a hound
That held in his fore-paws a spotted fawn,
Struggling before his open mouth. Although
The figures were of gold, we all admired
The hound intent to break his victim's neck,
The fawn that, writhing, plied her nimble feet
To free herself. Around the hero's chest
And waist I saw a lustrous tunic worn,
Soft, like the thin film of the onion dried,
And bright as sunshine; many ladies looked
With wonder on it. * * *

There came and went with him
A herald somewhat older than himself;
Let me portray him,—hunchbacked, swarthy skinned,
And curly haired, Eurybates his name.
Ulysses honored him above the rest
Of his companions, for they thought alike."

He ceased; the queen was moved to deeper grief,
For she remembered all the tokens well
Of which he spake; and when that passionate gust
Of weeping ceased, she spake again and said:—

"Stranger, till now thy presence in these halls
Has only moved my pity; thou henceforth
Art dear and honored. It was I who gave
The garments thou hast told me of; these hands
Folded them in my chamber. I put on
The glittering clasp to be his ornament,
And now I never shall behold him more
Returning to his own dear land and home;
So cruel was the fate that took him hence
To Ilium, in his roomy ship, a town
Of evil omen never to be named."

THE ODYSSEY.

[The Stranger Declares That Ulysses Is Alive, and
Will Return Within the Month.](—BRYANT.)

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered thus:
"O gracious consort of Laërtes' son!
Let not thy grief for him whom thou hast lost
Wither thy beauty longer, and consume
Thy heart. * * * But cease to grieve, and hear
What I shall say, and I shall speak the truth,
Nor will I hide from thee that I have heard,
But lately from Ulysses, yet alive,

* * *

Inquiring at Dodona's lofty oak
Of Jupiter, the counsel of the god
How to return to his dear native land,
So long a wanderer,—whether openly
Or else by stealth. So he is safe, and soon
Will he be nearer to us; for not long
Can he remain away from all his friends
And fatherland. To this I plight my oath;
Let Jove, the greatest and the best of gods,
Be witness, and this hearth of the good prince
Ulysses, where I sit, that every word
Which I have said to thee will be fulfilled.
Within the year Ulysses will return,
As this month passes and the next comes in."

[His Old Nurse, Euryclea, Being Bidden to
Bathe His Feet, He Dreads Lest She Come
Upon the Great White Scar, Made by a
Boar's Tusk Long Ago.](—COWPER.)

Him answered then Penelope, discreet:
"Grant heaven, my guest, that this good word of thine
Fail not! then, soon shalt thou such bounty share
And friendship at my hands, that, at first sight,

THE ODYSSEY.

Whoe'er shall meet thee shall pronounce thee blest.
But ah! my soul forebodes how it will prove;
Neither Ulysses will return, nor thou
Receive safe conduct hence. * * *

"Give him the bath, my maidens; spread his couch
With linen soft, with fleecy gaberdines
And rugs of splendid hue, that he may lie
Waiting, well-warm'd, the golden morn's return.
* * *

Dear guest! for of all travellers here arrived
From distant regions, I have none received
Discreet as thou, or whom I more have loved,
So just thy matter is, and with such grace
Express'd—I have an ancient maiden grave,
The nurse who at my hapless husband's birth
Received him in her arms, and with kind care
Maternal rear'd him; she shall wash thy feet,
Although decrepit. Euryclea, rise!
Wash one coeval with thy Lord; for such
The feet and hands, it may be, are become
Of my Ulysses now; since man beset
With sorrow once, soon wrinkled grows and old."

She said, then Euryclea with both hands
Covering her face, in tepid tears profuse
Dissolved, and thus in mournful strains began: * * *

"This office, which Icarius' daughter wise
To me enjoins, and which I glad perform
Yes; I will wash thy feet; both for her sake
And for thy own,—for sight of thee hath raised
A tempest in my mind. Hear now the cause!
Full many a guest forlorn we entertain,
But never any have I seen whose size,
The fashion of whose foot, and pitch of voice,
Such likeness of Ulysses show'd, as thine."

To whom Ulysses, ever-shrewd, replied:

THE ODYSSEY.

"Such close similitude, O ancient dame!
As thou observest between thy Lord and me,
All who have seen us both have ever found."

He said: then taking the resplendent vase
Allotted always to that use, she first
Infused cold water largely, then the warm.
Ulysses (for beside the hearth he sat)
Turn'd quick his face into the shade, alarm'd
Lest, handling him, she should at once remark
His scar, and all his stratagem unveil.
She then, approaching, minister'd the bath
To her own King, and at first touch discern'd
That token, by a bright-tusk'd boar of old
Impress'd, what time he to Parnassus went
To visit there Autolycus and his sons,
His mother's noble sire.

[The Old Nurse Discovering Ulysses by the
Great Scar, He Warns Her to Betray Him
Not.](—(WORSLEY.)

Thus the old nurse then washed him in the hall,
Wiped him with open hands, and by-and-by
Came on the scar and knew it, and let fall
His heel, which on the bronze clanged heavily,
Tilting it backward; and the bath ran dry.
Sorrow at once and joy her soul bedim,
While in her throat the liquid accents die,
And both her eyelids with the warm tears swim.
She to his beard upraised her hand, and spake to him:

"Surely thou art Odysseus—yes, thou art—
My darling child, and I not knew my king
Till I had handled thee in every part."
She spake and, eager to reveal the thing,
Full on Penelope her glance did fling;

THE ODYSSEY.

But, for Athené turned her thoughts away,
She nor regarded nor beheld. The king
Quickly his right hand on her throat did lay,
And drew her with his left yet nearer, and did say:

"Nurse, mother, hast thou loved me at thy breast
Only to kill me? In the twentieth year
Home I arrive with many toils opprest.
Now since thou knowest, and God makes it clear,
Hush! lest another should suspect or hear.
Else I avow, and all my word shall stand,
Not even thee, my nurse, will I then spare
When God subdues the suitors to my hand,
And with the sword I kill this faithless household
band."

* * * *

Then the old nurse new water through the hall
Brought, for the first was spilt, and him with care
Washed and anointed, and again made fall
Over the scar those rags which he did wear.
He then, adjusting these, drew to the fire his chair.

[Penelope, at Last Constrained to Choose, Re-
quires As a Test That the Suitors Shall Bend
the Great Bow of Ulysses.](BRYANT.)

And thus the sage Penelope began:—

"Stranger, but little longer will I yet
Inquire; the hour of grateful rest is near
For those who, though unhappy, can receive
The balm of slumber. Yet for me some god
Appoints immeasurable grief. All day
In sorrows and in sighs, my solace is
To oversee my maidens at their tasks
Here in the palace; but when evening comes,

THE ODYSSEY.

And all betake themselves to rest, I lie
Upon my couch, and sorrows thick and sharp
Awake new misery in my heart. * * *
My mind is tossed from thought to thought. I muse
Whether to keep my place beside my son,
And hold what here is mine, my dower, my maids
And high-roofed halls, as one who still reveres
Her husband's bed, and heeds the public voice,
Or follow one of the Achaian chiefs,
The noblest of the wooers, and the one
Who offers marriage presents without stint.
My son's green years, while he was yet a boy,
Unripe in mind, allowed me not to wed,
And leave his father's home; but he is grown,
And on the verge of manhood. He desires
That I should leave the palace, for his wrath
Is great against the men who waste his wealth.

* * * To-morrow brings to us
The hateful morn which takes me from my home,
The palace of Ulysses. I shall now
Propose a contest. In the palace court
Ulysses in a row set up twelve stakes,
Like props that hold a galley up; each stake
Had its own ring; he stood afar, and sent
An arrow through them all. I shall propose
This contest to the suitors. He who bends
The bow with easy mastery, and sends
Through the twelve rings an arrow, I will take
To follow from the palace where I passed
My youthful married life—a beautiful home,
And stored with wealth; a home which I shall long
Remember, even in my nightly dreams."

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered thus:
"O gracious consort of Laërtes' son!

THE ODYSSEY.

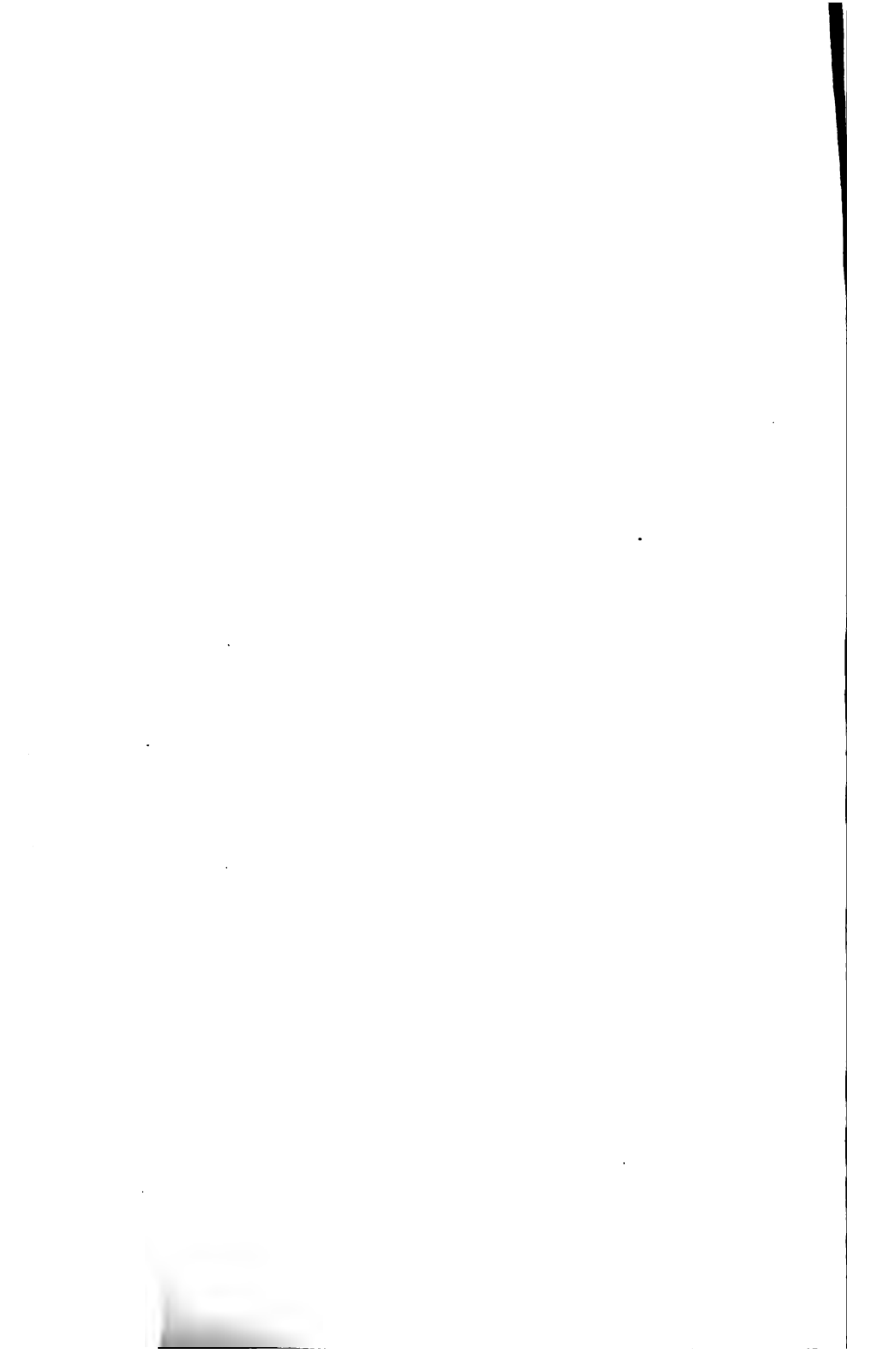
Let not this contest be delayed; the man
Of ready wiles, Ulysses, will be here
Ere, tampering with the hero's polished bow,
The suitors shall prevail to stretch the cord,
And send an arrow through the rings of steel."

* * * *

Penelope, thus having spoken, went
Up to her royal bower, but not alone;
Her maids went with her. When they were within
She wept for her dear husband, till at length
The blue-eyed Pallas graciously distilled
Upon her closing lids the balm of sleep.



BOOK XX



BOOK XX: PART I

THE STORY

THE next day many things cheered Ulysses for that which he had to do; for first Athené had told him that she would stand at his side, and next he heard the thunder of Zeus in a clear sky, and last it chanced that a woman who sat at the mill grinding corn, being sore weary of her task, and hating the suitors, said, "Grant, Father Zeus, that this be the last meal which these men shall eat in the house of Ulysses!"

And after a while the suitors came and sat down, as was their wont, to the feast. And the servants bare to Ulysses, as Telemachus had bidden, a full share with the others. And when Ctesippus, a prince of Samos, saw this (he was a man heedless of right and of the gods), he said, "Is it well that this fellow should fare even as we? Look now at the gift that I shall give him." Whereupon he took a bullock's foot out of a basket wherein it lay, and cast it at Ulysses.

But he moved his head to the left and shunned it, and it flew on, marking the wall. And Telemachus cried in great wrath—

"It is well for thee. Ctesippus, that thou didst not strike this stranger. For surely, hadst thou done this thing, my spear had pierced thee through, and thy father had made good cheer, not for thy marriage, but for thy burial."

Then said Agelaüs, "This is well said. Telemachus

THE ODYSSEY.

should not be wronged, no, nor this stranger. But, on the other hand, he must bid his mother choose out of the suitors whom she will, and marry him, nor waste our time any more."

And Telemachus said, "It is well. She shall marry whom she will. But from my house I will never send her against her will."

And the suitors laughed; but their laughter was not of mirth, and the flesh which they ate dripped with blood, and their eyes were full of tears. And the eyes of the seer Theoclymenus were opened, and he cried—

"What ails you, miserable ones? For your heads and your faces and your knees are covered with darkness, and the voice of groaning comes from you, and your cheeks are wet with tears. Also the walls and the pillars are sprinkled with blood, and the porch and the hall are full of shadows that move towards hell, and the sun has perished from the heavens, and an evil mist is over all."

But they laughed to hear him; and Eurymachus said, "This stranger is mad; let us send him out of doors into the market-place, for it seems that here it is dark."

Also they scoffed at Telemachus, but he heeded them not, but sat waiting till his father should give the sign.

BOOK XX: PART II

THE POEM

[Ulysses, Wakeful with Pondering How He Can
Prevail Against Great Numbers, Is Reassured
by Pallas.]—(COWPER.)

BUT in the vestibule the hero lay
On a bull's hide undress'd, o'er which he spread
The fleece of many a sheep slain by the Greeks,
And, cover'd by the household's governess
With a wide cloak, composed himself to rest.
Yet slept he not, but meditating lay
Woe to his enemies. Meantime the train
Of women wonted to the suitors' arms,
Issuing all mirth and laughter, in his soul
A tempest raised of doubts, whether at once
To slay, or to permit them yet to give
Their lusty paramours one last embrace.
As growls the mastiff standing on the start
For battle, if a stranger's foot approach
Her cubs new-whelp'd—so growl'd Ulysses' heart,
While wonder fill'd him at their impious deeds.
But, smiting on his breast, thus he reproved
The mutinous inhabitant within.
"Heart! bear it. Worse than this thou didst endure
When, uncontrollable by force of man,
The Cyclops thy illustrious friends devour'd.
Thy patience then fail'd not, till prudence found
Deliverance for thee on the brink of fate."

THE ODYSSEY.

So disciplined the hero his own heart,
Which, tractable, endured the rigorous curb,
And patient; yet he turn'd from side to side.
As when some hungry swain turns oft a maw
Unctuous and savory on the burning coals,
Quick expediting his desired repast,
So he from side to side roll'd, pondering deep
How likeliest with success he might assail
Those shameless suitors; one to many opposed.
Then, sudden from the skies descending, came
Minerva in a female form; her stand
Above his head she took, and thus she spake:

"Why sleep'st thou not, unhappiest of mankind?
Thou art at home; here dwells thy wife, and here
Thy son; a son, whom all might wish their own."

Then her Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise:
"O Goddess! true is all that thou hast said,
But, not without anxiety, I muse
How, single as I am, I shall assail
Those shameless suitors who frequent my courts
Daily, and always their whole multitude.
This weightier theme I meditate beside;
Should I, with Jove's concurrence and with thine,
Prevail to slay them, how shall I escape,
Myself, at last? Oh Goddess, weigh it well."

Him answer'd then Pallas cœrulean-eyed:
Oh faithless man! a man will in his friend
Confide, though mortal, and in valor less
And wisdom than himself; but I who keep
Thee in all difficulties, am divine.
I tell thee plainly. Were we hemm'd around
By fifty troops of shouting warriors bent
To slay thee, thou should'st yet securely drive
The flocks away and cattle of them all,

THE ODYSSEY.

But yield to sleep's soft influence; for to lie
All night thus watchful, is, itself, distress.
Fear not. Deliverance waits, not far remote."

So saying, she o'er Ulysses' eyes diffused
Soft slumbers, and when sleep, that soothes the mind
And nerves the limbs afresh, had seized him once,
To the Olympian summit swift return'd.

[Answering the Prayer of Ulysses, Jove Grants an
Omen, Promising the Suitors' Death.]—
(WORSLEY.)

He when the golden morning beamed the skins laid
by,
Placed out of doors the bull's-hide, and on high
His hands uplifted, and to Zeus made prayer:
"O Father Zeus, if over moist and dry
Me with good will to mine own land ye bare
At last, though sorely crushed with toil and grief and
care,

"Let some one of the moving men within
Send forth a voice that I may know the sign;
And from without some wonder let me win,
Omen of Zeus." Thus he in prayer divine.
And the great Sire did favorably incline,
And far up thundered in a cloudless sky,
Where the serene vaults of Olympus shine.
And brave Odysseus heard him roll on high
The thunder, and in heart rejoiced exceedingly.

And, not far off, a woman of the mill,
Where for the suitors the soft flour was ground,
Forth from the palace sent an omen shrill.
For women, twelve in all, the mills work round,
Piling continually the mealy mound

THE ODYSSEY.

Of barley and fine wheat, the marrow of men.
Now all the rest slept. She alone was found
Yet grinding, weakest of them all. And then
Pausing she spake, clear signal for her lord to ken:

"Oh Father Zeus, who gods and men dost sway,
Loud rings thy thunder from the starry heaven
Where never a cloud appeareth in the way.
Surely to some one thou a sign hast given.
Now help me too, poor sufferer over-driven,
And in Odysseus' halls let eat their last
All the proud suitors, ere day verge to even;
Who loose my knees, and make me toil and fast
Grinding the meal with pain. Now let them eat their
last!"

She spake. Divine Odysseus, for her cry
And the loud peal of Zeus, joyed in his breast,
And knew the suitors in their sin should die.

[Philoetius, the Herdsman, Declares That Should
Ulysses Return, He Will Aid Him.](—(BRY-
ANT.)

* * Now appeared
Melanthius, keeper of the goats. He brought
Goats for the suitors' banquet; they were choice
Beyond all others. With him also came
Two goatherds. In the echoing portico
He bound his goats. He saw Ulysses there,
And thus accosted him with railing words:—
"Stranger, art thou still here, the palace pest,
And begging still, and wilt thou ne'er depart?
We shall not end this quarrel, I perceive,
Till thou hast tried the flavor of my fist.
It is not decent to be begging here

THE ODYSSEY.

Continually; the Greeks have other feasts."

He spake; Ulysses answered not, but shook
His head in silence, planning fearful things.

Philoetius now, a master-herdsman, came,
And for the banquet of the suitors led
A heifer that had never yeaned, and goats
The fatlings of the flock. * * *

He spake, and, greeting with his offered hand
Ulysses, said in wingéd words aloud:—

"Stranger and father, hail! and mayst thou yet
Be happy in the years to come at least,
Though held in thrall by many sorrows now.

* * * My eyes

Are filled with tears when to my mind comes back
The image of Ulysses, who must now,
I think, be wandering, clothed in rags like thee,
Among the abodes of men, if yet indeed
He lives and sees the sweet light of the sun.

But if that he be dead, and in the abode
Of Pluto, woe is me for his dear sake!

* * * And long ago would I have fled
To some large-minded monarch, since this waste
Is not to be endured, but that I think
Still of my suffering lord, and hope that yet
He may return and drive the suitors hence."

Ulysses, the sagacious, answering, said:

"Herdsman, since thou dost seem not ill inclined,
Nor yet unwise, and I perceive in thee

A well-discerning mind, I therefore say,
And pledge my solemn oath,—Jove, first of gods,
Be witness, and this hospitable board

And hearth of good Ulysses, which has here
Received me,—while thou art within these halls
Ulysses will assuredly return,

And, if thou choose to look, thine eyes shall see
The suitors slain, who play the master here."

THE ODYSSEY.

And thus the master of the herds rejoined:
"Stranger, may Jupiter make good thy words!
Then shalt thou see what strength is in my arm."

Eumæus also prayed to all the gods,
That now the wise Ulysses might return.
So talked they with each other, while apart
The suitors doomed Telemachus to death,
And plotted how to take his life.

[Incensed by the Suitors' Insults to Ulysses, Telemachus Threatens Death, and Refuses to Compel His Mother to Wed.]—(WORSLEY.)

Meanwhile Telemachus with shrewd design
Hard by the stony threshold did assign
A small rude table and unseemly chair
For his dear father, the wise chief divine,
And of the entrails gave him a due share,
And filled a golden goblet, and addressed him there:

"Now with the other guests sit drinking wine,
And I will save thee from all scorn and wrong.
For this house is Odysseus' house and mine,
Not public. And keep down your spirits strong,
Ye suitors, lest a battle arise ere long."
He spake. The suitors in fell wrath did bite
Their lips, and wondered that with such bold tongue
He dared to beard them, and thus talk of fight.

* * * *

Hardened Athené then the suitors' heart,
That they should go from sin to sin, and make
Soul of Laertiades Odysseus smart
Yet deeper. And amid the suitors spake
One who divine laws ever wont to break,
Ctesippus, who in Samè did abide.
He, trusting in his wealth, was fain to take

THE ODYSSEY.

Wife of the lord Odysseus for his bride.
He 'mid the suitors spake in overweening pride:

"Hear me, ye noble suitors, while I speak!
This stranger, as beseemeth, long ago
Hath, like all strangers who this mansion seek,
His full share; since toward such men to deal woe
Is neither honorable nor just, I trow.
Mark what a loyal gift from even me
He wins; and let him for this grace bestow
Here on the servant of the bath good fee,

Or other of the slaves that in this mansion be."

Thus did he speak, and fiery insult planned;
For a bull's foot, which in the basket lay,
Forthwith he seized and flung with violent hand.
Nor for the blow did brave Odysseus stay,
But from the weapon, as it came that way,
Dipped his head lightly to the left; and, while
Stern in his breast the writhing angers play,
Smiled from the heart a fell sardonic smile.
The foot flew right on, and did the wall defile.

O! Telemachus a fierce word spake:
Now, Ctesippus, and thank Heaven for this,
Better is it for thine own life's sake,
The poor stranger crouched and let thee miss,
Had I surely made my javelin hiss
Through thy midriff; and thy father here,
For the banquet of thy nuptial bliss,
For thy burial had set forth good cheer.
Before let all take warning and my house revere.

Once a child, can now discern full well
Things good and evil. Sheep and wine and corn
Boil as ye list: 'tis hard for one to quell
So many: but refrain from deeds of scorn.

THE ODYSSEY.

Better it were that I had not been born,
Or better I were slain, if so ye will,
Than thus behold the stranger-guest forlorn
Spurned in mine own house and entreated ill,
And the maids dealt with roughly, your dire lusts to
fill."

He ceased, but all were silent, and at last
Son of Damastor Agelaus spake:
"Friends, when a just word from the lips hath passed,
Not righteous is it scorn and strife to make.
Nor let this stranger of foul wrong partake,
Nor any of the servants that be here.
But to Telemachus I fain would break
This counsel mild, and to his mother dear,
So that it please their spirit and they list to hear.

"While yet ye hoped Odysseus should come back,
Nothing forbade that ye should still remain
And of their marriage let the suitors lack,
Since his return were doubly to your gain.
But now that he hath perished is quite plain.
Wherefore advise thy mother at last to wed
That man to whom her spirit is most fain.
So from thy father's wealth shalt thou be fed
Rejoicing, while she tends another home and bed."

To whom the wise Telemachus replied:
"Now by the lord Zeus and my father's woe
Who far from Ithaca's dear soil hath died,
Or wanders in the wide earth to and fro,
Not for my word doth the queen still forego
This marriage: let her marry whom she list,
And on that day will I large gifts bestow.
But she shall never be from home dismissed
Perforce, nor such dire wrong God suffer to exist!"

BOOK XXI

BOOK XXI: PART I

THE STORY

AFTER this Penelopé went to fetch the great bow of Ulysses, which Iphitus had given to him. From the peg on which it hung she took it with its sheath, and sitting down, she laid it on her knees and wept over it, and after this rose up and went to where the suitors sat feasting in the hall. The bow she brought, and also the quiver full of arrows, and standing by the pillar of the dome, spake thus—

“Ye suitors who devour this house, making pretense that ye wish to wed me, lo! here is a proof of your skill. Here is the bow of the great Ulysses. Whoso shall bend it easiest in his hands, and shoot an arrow most easily through the helve-holes of the twelve axes that Telemachus shall set up, him will I follow, leaving this house, which I shall remember only in my dreams.”

Then she bade Eumæus bear the bow and the arrows to the suitors. And the good swineherd wept to see his master's bow, and Philætiús, the herdsman of the king, wept also, for he was a good man, and loved the house of Ulysses.

Then Telemachus planted in due order the axes wherein were the helve-holes, and was minded himself to draw the bow; and indeed would have done the thing, but Ulysses signed to him that he should not. Wherefore he said, “Methinks I am too weak and young; ye that are elder should try the first.”

THE ODYSSEY.

Then first Leiodes, the priest, who alone among the suitors hated their evil ways, made trial of the bow. But he moved it not, but wearied his hands with it, for they were tender, and unwont to toil. And he said, "I cannot bend this bow; let some other try; but it shall be grief and pain to many this day, I trow."

And Antinoüs was wroth to hear such words, and bade Melanthius bring forth from the stores a roll of fat, that they might anoint the string and soften it withal. So they softened the string with fat, but not for that the more could they bend it, for they tried all of them in vain, till only Antinoüs and Eurymachus were left, who indeed were the bravest and the strongest of them all.

Now the swineherd and the herdsman of the kine had gone forth out of the yard, and Ulysses came behind them and said, "What would ye do if Ulysses were to come back to his home? Would ye fight for him, or for the suitors?"

And both said that they would fight for him.

And Ulysses said, "It is even I who am come back in the twentieth year, and ye, I know, are glad at heart that I am come; nor know I of any one besides. And if ye will help me as brave men to-day, wives shall ye have, and possessions and houses near to mine own. And ye shall be brothers and comrades to Telemachus. And for a sign, behold this scar, which the wild boar made when I hunted with Autolycus."

Then they wept for joy and kissed Ulysses, and he also kissed them. And he said to Eumæus that he should bring the bow to him when the suitors had tried their fortune therewith; also that he should bid the women keep within doors, nor stir out if they should hear the noise of battle. And Philætiüs he bade lock the doors of the hall, and fasten them with a rope.

After this he came back to the hall, and Eurymachus

THE ODYSSEY.

had the bow in his hands, and sought to warm it at the fire. Then he essayed to draw it, but could not. And he groaned aloud, saying, "Woe is me! not for loss of this marriage only, for there are other women to be wooed in Greece, but that we are so much weaker than the great Ulysses. This is indeed shame to tell."

Then said Antinoüs, "Not so; to-day is a holy day of the God of Archers; therefore we could not draw the bow. But to-morrow will we try once more, after due sacrifice to Apollo,"

And this saying pleased them all; but Ulysses said, "Let me try this bow, for I would fain know whether I have such strength as I had in former days."

At this all the suitors were wroth, and chiefly Antinoüs, but Penelopé said that it should be so, and promised the man great gifts if he could draw this bow.

But Telemachus spake thus, "Mother, the bow is mine to give or to refuse. And no man shall say me nay, if I will that this stranger make trial of it. But do thou go to thy chamber with thy maidens, and let men take thought for these things."

And this he said, for that he would have her depart from the hall forthwith, knowing what should happen therein. But she marveled to hear him speak with such authority, and answered not, but departed. And when Eumæus would have carried the bow to Ulysses, the suitors spake roughly to him, but Telemachus constrained him to go. Therefore he took the bow and gave it to his master. Then went he to Euryclea, and bade her shut the door of the women's chambers and keep them within, whatsoever they might hear. Also Philætiüs shut the doors of the hall, and fastened them with a rope.

Then Ulysses handled the great bow, trying it, whether it had taken any hurt, but the suitors thought

THE ODYSSEY.

scorn of him. Then, when he had found it to be without flaw, just as a minstrel fastens a string upon his harp and strains it to the pitch, so he strung the bow without toil; and holding the string in his right hand, he tried its tone, and the tone was sweet as the voice of a swallow. Then he took an arrow from the quiver, and laid the notch upon the string and drew it, sitting as he was and the arrow passed through every ring, and stood in the wall beyond. Then he said to Telemachus—

"There is yet a feast to be held before the sun go down."

And he nodded the sign to Telemachus. And forthwith the young man stood by him, armed with spear and helmet and shield.

BOOK XXI: PART II

THE POEM

[Queen Penelope, Making Ready the Great Bow
of Ulysses for the Trial of the Suitors, Mourns
Her Absent Lord.]—(CHAPMAN.)

PALLAS, the Goddess with the sparkling eyes,
Excites Penelope t' object the prize.
The bow and bright steels, to the Wooers' strength:
And here began the strife and blood at length.
She first ascended by a lofty stair
Her utmost chamber; of whose door her fair
And half transparent hand receiv'd the key,
Bright, brazen, bitted passing curiously,
And at it hung a knob of ivory.
And this did lead her where was strongly kept
The treasure-royal; in whose store lay heapt
Gold, brass, and steel, engrav'n with infinite art;
The crooked bow, and arrowy quiver, part
Of that rich magazine. In the quiver were
Arrows a number, sharp and sighing gear.
The bow was giv'n by kind Eurytides
Iphitus, fashion'd like the Deities,
To young Ulysses, * * * who so dear
A gift esteem'd it, that he would not bear
In his black fleet that guest-rite to the war,
But, in fit memory of one so far

THE ODYSSEY.

In his affection, brought it home, and kept
His treasure with it; where till now it slept.

And now the Queen of women had intent
To give it use, and therefore made ascent
Up all the stairs' height to the chamber door,
Whose shining leaves two bright pilasters bore.

* * * *

The ring she took then, and did draw aside
A bar that ran within, and then implied
The key into the lock, which gave a sound,
The bolt then shooting, as in pasture ground
A bull doth low, and make the valleys ring;
So loud the lock humm'd when it loos'd the spring,
And ope the doors flew. In she went, along
The lofty chamber, that was boarded strong
With heart of oak, which many years ago
The architect did smooth and polish so
That now as then he made it freshly shine,
And tried the evenness of it with a line.

There stood in this room presses that enclos'd
Robes odoriferous, by which repos'd
The bow was upon pins; nor from it far
Hung the round quiver glitt'ring like a star;
Both which her white extended hand took down.
Then sat she low, and made her lap a crown
Of both these relics, which she wept to see,
And cried quite out with loving memory
Of her dead lord; to whose worth paying then
Kind debts enow, she left, and, to the men
Vow'd to her wooing, brought the crooked bow,
And shaft-receiving quiver, that did flow
With arrows beating sighs up where they fell.
Then, with another chest, replete as well
With games won by the King, of steel and brass,
Her maids attended.

THE ODYSSEY.

[Penelope, Coming Before the Suitors, Declares
That She Will Wed Him Who Can Draw
the Great Bow of Ulysses.](—(WORSLEY.)

So came the queen near to the banquet-board;
And by the pillar of the dome she stood,
Screened with her lucid veil, and spake this word:
"Hear now, ye suitors, who for drink and food
Lie heavy on this house, and vex my widowhood.

"This was your pretext, and none else but this,
To wed me. Come, behold your test of skill!
Nor of due guerdon shall the victor miss.
Here is my lord's bow; feel it as ye will;
And from whose hand the shaft with easiest thrill
Flies through each ring which there in order gleams,
Him will I follow both for good and ill,
Leaving this house which so delightful seems,
Home to be yet remembered even in my dreams."

Thus did she speak, and the good swineherd bade
Give them the bow and plant the rings in line.
He with a tear those arms beside them laid.
And, where he stood, the herdsman of the kine
Wept, the bow seeing of his lord divine.
On whom Antinoüs bitter scorn did heap:
"Fools of the passing hour, why stand and whine,
Boors that ye are, and make the lady weep?
Is not enough that still she wails in anguish deep

"Her husband? Feast in quiet, or go out
And wail your fill; but leave the weapons here.
Soon will the suitors have a weary bout.
Nor lightly will they bend, as I much fear,
The burnished bow: for not a single peer,
Of all now present, to the brave old king

THE ODYSSEY.

Stands, as I viewed him in a distant year.
Yea, to my mind full readily can I bring—
Though a mere child I was—remembrance of the king.”

Thus the man spake, but hoped the while in heart
Himself the cord to conquer, and make fly
Sheer through the steely rings the barbèd dart;
Yet first was fated to taste by-and-by
That arrow, aimed from the unerring eye
Of brave Odysseus—whom within the hall
Late he reviled and used discourteously,
And to like outrage did his comrades call.

[Telemachus Ironically Encourages the Suitors
and Himself Essays to Bend the Bow.]—
(BRYANT.)

Then Telemachus
Rose in his sacred might, and thus began: * * *
“Come then, since such a contest is proposed,
Ye suitors! and for such a woman too, * * *
Let there be no excuses for delay,
Nor longer leave the bow untried, that we
May see the event. I too am moved to try;
And if I bend the bow, and send a shaft
Through all the rings, my gracious mother then
Will not, to my great grief, renounce her home,
And, following another, leave me here,
Although my prowess even now might win
The glorious prizes that my father won.”

He spake, and, rising, from his shoulders took
The purple cloak, and laid the trenchant sword
Aside; and first he placed the rings of steel
In order, opening for them in the ground
A long trench by a line, and stamping close
The earth around them. All admired the skill

THE ODYSSEY.

With which he ranged them, never having seen
The game before. And then he took his place
Upon the threshold, and essayed the bow;
And thrice he made the attempt, and thrice gave o'er,
Yet hoping still to draw the cord, and send
An arrow through the rings. He would have drawn
The bow at the fourth trial, but a nod
Given by his father caused him to forbear,
Though eager for the attempt. * * *

* * * Setting down the bow to lean
Against the firm smooth panels of the wall,
And the swift shaft against the bow's fair curve,
He took again his seat upon the throne
From which he rose.

[Leiodes, Failing to Bend the Bow, Predicts Woe:
While Others Seek by Oil and Heat to Make
It Supple.](—(COWPER.)

Then, first, Leiodes, Cēnop's son, arose.
He was their soothsayer, and ever sat
Beside the beaker, inmost of them all.
To him alone of all, licentious deeds
Were odious, and with indignation fired,
He witness'd the excesses of the rest.
He then took foremost up the shaft and bow,
And, station'd at the portal, strove to bend
But bent it not, fatiguing, first, his hands
Delicate and uncustom'd to the toil,
He ceased, and the assembly thus bespake:
"My friends, I speed not; let another try;
For many Princes shall this bow of life
Bereave, since death more eligible seems,
Far more, than loss of her, for whom we meet
Continual here, expecting still the prize." * * *
He said, and set the bow down on the floor,

THE ODYSSEY.

Reclining it against the panels smooth
That lined the wall; the arrow, next, he placed,
Leaning against the bow's bright-polish'd horn,
And to the seat whence he had risen return'd.
Then him Antinoüs, angry, thus reproved:

"What word, Leiodes, grating to our ears
Hath 'scaped thy lips? I hear it with disdain.
Shall this bow fatal prove to many a Prince,
Because thou hast thyself too feeble proved
To bend it? No. Thou wast not born to bend
The unpliant bow, or to direct the shaft,
But here are nobler who shall soon prevail."

He said, and to Melanthius gave command,
The goat-herd: "Hence, Melanthius, kindle fire;
Beside it place, with fleeces spread, a form
Of length commodious; from within procure
A large round cake of suet next, with which
When we have chafed and suppl'd the tough bow
Before the fire, we will again essay
To bend it, and decide the doubtful strife."

He ended, and Melanthius, kindling fire,
Beside it placed, with fleeces spread, a form
Of length commodious; next he brought a cake
Ample and round of suet from within,
With which they chafed the bow, then tried again
To bend, but bent it not; superior strength
To theirs the task required. Yet two, the rest
In force surpassing, made no trial yet,
Antinoüs and Eurymachus the brave.

[Ulysses Makes Himself Known to His Faithful
Servants, to Their Great Joy.](—(POPE.)

Then from the hall, and from the noisy crew,
The masters of the herd and flock withdrew.

THE ODYSSEY.

The king observes them, he the hall forsakes,
And, past the limits of the court, o'ertakes.
Then thus with accent mild Ulysses spoke:

"Ye faithful guardians of the herd and flock!
Shall I the secret of my breast conceal,
Or (as my soul now dictates) shall I tell?
Say, should some favoring god restore again
The lost Ulysses to his native reign,
How beat your hearts? what aid would you afford,
To the proud suitors, or your ancient lord?"

Philæti^{us} thus: "O were thy word not vain!
Would mighty Jove restore that man again!
These aged sinews, with new vigor strung,
In his blest cause should emulate the young."

With equal vows Eumæus too implored
Each power above, with wishes for his lord.

He saw their secret souls, and thus began:
"Those vows the gods accord; behold the man!
Your own Ulysses! twice ten years detain'd
By woes and wanderings from this hapless land:
At length he comes; but comes despised, unknown,
And finding faithful you, and you alone.
All else have cast him from their very thought,
E'en in their wishes and their prayers forgot!
Hear then, my friends: If Jove this arm succeed,
And give yon impious revellers to bleed,
My care shall be to bless your future lives
With large possessions and with faithful wives;
Fast by my palace shall your domes ascend,
And each on young Telemachus attend,
And each be call'd his brother and my friend
To give you firmer faith, now trust your eye;
Lo! the broad scar indented on my thigh,

THE ODYSSEY.

When with Autolycus's sons, of yore,
On Parnass' top I chased the tusky boar."

His ragged vest then drawn aside disclosed
The sign conspicuous, and the scar exposed:
Eager they viewed; with joy they stood amazed;
With tearful eyes o'er all their master gazed:
Around his neck their longing arms they cast,
His head, his shoulders, and his knees embraced;
Tears followed tears; no word was in their power;
In solemn silence fell the kindly shower.
The king too weeps; the king too grasps their hands,
And moveless, as a marble fountain, stands.

Thus had their joy wept down the setting sun,
But first the wise man ceased, and thus begun:
"Enough—on other cares your thought employ,
For danger waits on all untimely joy.
Full many foes, and fierce, observe us near;
Some may betray, and yonder walls may hear.
Re-enter then, not all at once, but stay
Some moments you, and let me lead the way.
To me, neglected as I am, I know
The haughty suitors will deny the bow;
But thou, Eumæus, as 'tis borne away,
Thy master's weapon to his hand convey.
At every portal let some matron wait,
And each lock fast the well-compacted gate:
Close let them keep, whate'er invades their ear;
Though arms, or shouts, or dying groans they hear.
To thy strict charge, Philæti^{us}, we consign
The court's main gate: to guard that pass be thine."

This said, he first return'd; the faithful swains
At distance follow, as their king ordains.

THE ODYSSEY.

[Ulysses Craves to Attempt the Bending of the Bow; Antinoüs Refuses His Request with Bitter Words, But Telemachus Commands That the Bow Be Given to Ulysses.]—
(BRYANT.)

The shrewd Ulysses thus
With artful speech bespake the suitor-train:—

“Hearken, ye suitors of the illustrious queen,
To what my heart is prompting me to say; * * *
But let me take that polished bow, and try
Among you, whether still the power that dwelt
In these once pliant limbs abides in them,
Or whether happily it has passed from me
Amid my wanderings and a life of want.”

He spake, and all were vehemently moved
With anger, for they feared that he would bend
The bow, and thus Antinoüs, railing, spake:—

“Thou worthless vagabond, without a spark
Of reason, art thou not content to sit
And banquet with the proudest, where no part
Of all the feast escapes thee, hearing all
That we are saying, which no other man,
Stranger and beggar, is allowed to hear!
This good wine makes thee foolish, as wine oft
Makes those who swallow it too greedily,
And drink not with due stint. * * *
* * * Drink, then, in peace
Thy wine, and seek no strife with younger men.”

Then spake the sage Penelope again:
“Truly, Antinoüs, it becomes thee not,
Nor is it just, to vex the stranger guests

THE ODYSSEY.

Who seek the palace of Telemachus.
Dost thou, then, think that, should this stranger bend,
Proud as he is of his great strength of arm,
The mighty bow that once Ulysses bore,
He leads me hence a bride? No hope of that
Is in his heart, and let no one of you
Who banquet here allow a thought like that
To vex him; 'tis a thing that cannot be.
* * * The stranger's frame
Is powerful and well knit; he claims to be
Of noble parentage. Now let him take
The bow, and we will see the event; but this
I promise, and will make my promise good,
If he should bend it,—if Apollo give
To him that glory,—he shall have from me
A tunic and a cloak, fair garments both,
And a keen javelin, his defence against
Both dogs and men, a two-edged sword besides,
And sandals for his feet, and I engage
To send him whither he desires to go."

Then spake discreet Telemachus again:
"Mother, in all Achaia there is none
Who has more power than I can claim, to grant
Or to deny the bow to whom I will.
No one of those who rule the rugged coast
Of Ithaca, or isles where Elis breeds
Her mares, may interpose to thwart my will,
If on the stranger I bestow the bow
To be his own, and bid him take it hence.
Withdraw, O queen, into thy bower; direct
Thy household tasks, the distaff and the web,
And bid thy maidens speed the work. The bow
Belongs to men, and most to me; for here,
Within these walls, the authority is mine."

THE ODYSSEY.

The queen, astonished, heard him and withdrew,
But kept her son's wise sayings in her heart.

[The Great Bow Comes Into the Hands of Its
Master, Who Causes the Gates to be Made
Fast, and Then Shoots with Ease an Arrow
Through the Rings.](POPE.)

Now through the press the bow Eumæus bore,
And all was riot, noise, and wild uproar.
"Hold! lawless rustic! whither wilt thou go?
To whom, insensate, dost thou bear the bow?
Exiled for this to some sequester'd den,
Far from the sweet society of men,
To thy own dogs a prey thou shalt be made;
If Heaven and Phœbus lend the suitors aid."
Thus they. Aghast he laid the weapon down,
But bold Telemachus thus urged him on:
"Proceed, false slave, and slight their empty words:
What! hopes the fool to please so many lords?"

* * * *

Eumæus, thus encouraged, hastes to bring
The strifeful bow, and gives it to the king.
Old Euryclea calling then aside,
"Hear what Telemachus enjoins," he cried:
"At every portal let some matron wait,
And each lock fast the well-compacted gate;
And if unusual sounds invade their ear,
If arms, or shouts, or dying groans they hear,
Let none to call or issue forth presume,
But close attend the labors of the loom."
Her prompt obedience on his order waits;
Closed in an instant were the palace gates.
In the same moment forth Philæti^{us} flies,

THE ODYSSEY.

Secures the court, and with a cable ties
The utmost gate (the cable strongly wrought
Of Byblos' reed, a ship from Egypt brought),
Then unperceived and silent at the board
His seat he takes, his eyes upon his lord.

And now his well-known bow the master bore,
Turn'd on all sides, and view'd it o'er and o'er;
Lest time or worms had done the weapon wrong,
Its owner absent, and untried so long.
While some deriding—"How he turns the bow!
Some other like it sure the man must know,
Or else would copy; or in bows he deals;
Perhaps he makes them, or perhaps he steals."
"Heaven to this wretch (another cried) be kind!
And bless, in all to which he stands inclined,
With such good fortune as he now shall find."

Heedless he heard them; but disdain'd reply;
The bow perusing with exactest eye.
Then, as some heavenly minstrel, taught to sing
High notes responsive to the trembling string,
To some new strain when he adapts the lyre,
Or the dumb lute refits with vocal wire,
Relaxes, strains, and draws them to and fro;

So the great master drew the mighty bow,
And drew with ease. One hand aloft display'd
The bending horns, and one the string essay'd.
From his essaying hand the string, let fly,
Twang'd short and sharp, like the shrill swallows' cry.
A general horror rang through all the race,
Sunk was each heart, and pale was every face.
Signs from above ensued; the unfolding sky
In lightning burst; Jove thunder'd from on high.
Fired at the call of heaven's almighty Lord,
He snatched the shaft that glitter'd on the board

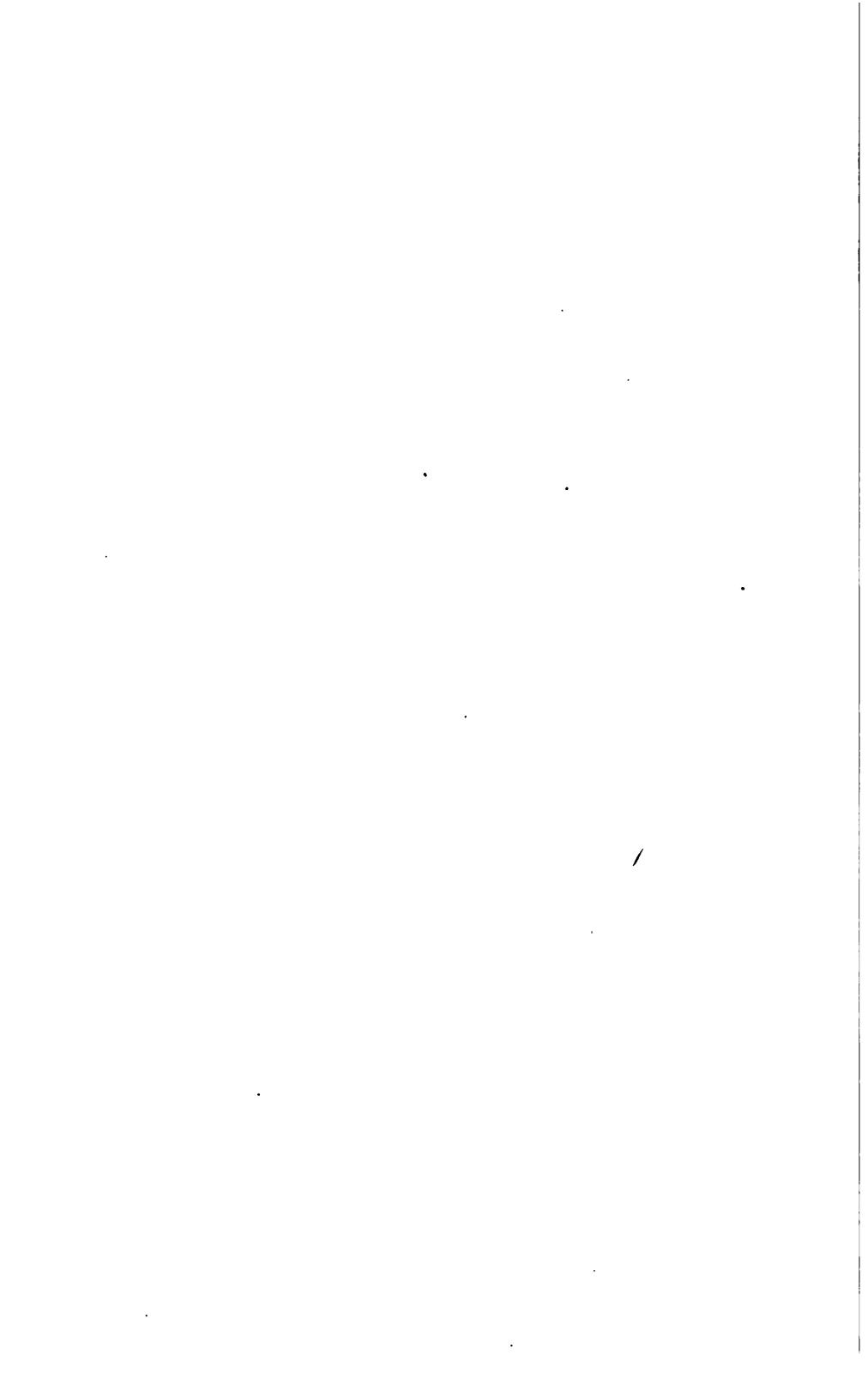
THE ODYSSEY.

(Fast by, the rest lay sleeping in the sheath,
But soon to fly, the messengers of death).

Now sitting as he was, the cord he drew,
Through every ringlet leveling his view:
Then notch'd the shaft, released, and gave it wing,
The whizzing arrow vanish'd from the string,
Sung on direct, and threaded every ring.
The solid gate its fury scarcely bounds;
Pierced through and through, the solid gate resounds.
Then to the prince: "Nor have I wrought the shame;
Nor err'd this hand unfaithful to its aim;
Nor prov'd the toil too hard; nor have I lost
That ancient vigor, once my pride and boast.
Ill I deserved these haughty peers' disdain;
Now let them comfort their dejected train,
In sweet repast their present hour employ,
Nor wait till evening for the genial joy:
Then to the lute's soft voice prolong the night;
Music, the banquet's most refined delight."

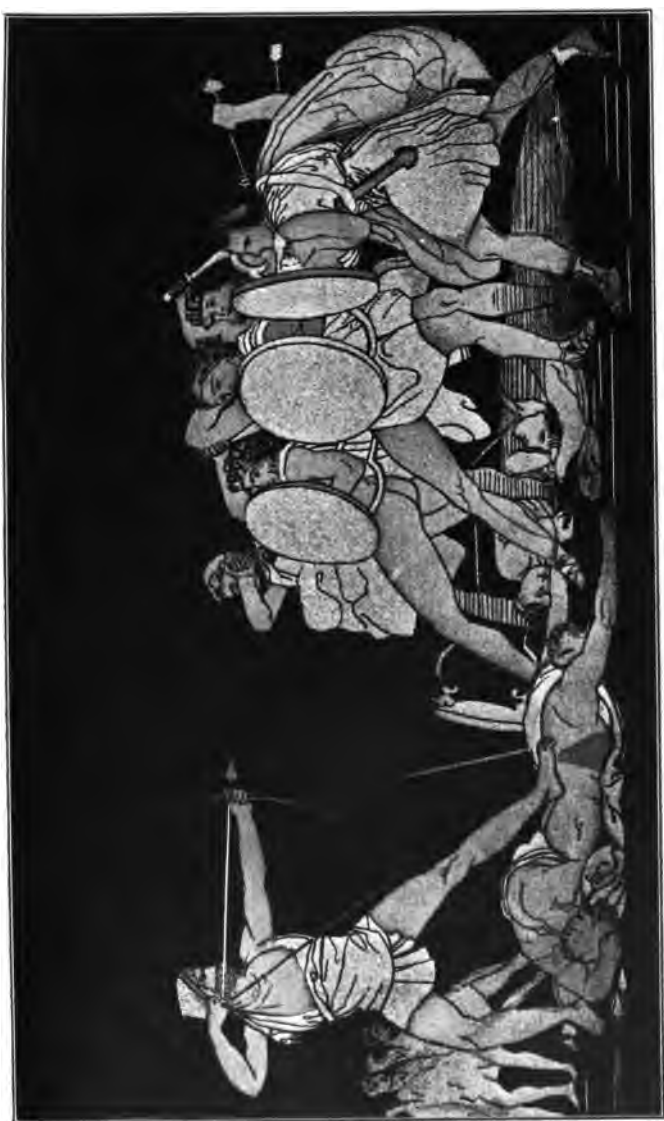
He said, then gave a nod; and at the word
Telemachus girds on his shining sword.
Fast by his father's side he takes his stand:
The beamy javelin lightens in his hand.

BOOK XXII



Death of the Suitors.

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BOOK XXII: PART I

THE STORY

CHEN spake he among the suitors, "This labor has been accomplished. Let me try at yet another mark."

And he aimed his arrow at Antinoüs. But the man was just raising a cup to his lips, thinking not of death, for who had thought that any man, though mightiest of mortals, would venture on such a deed, being one among many? Right through the neck passed the arrow-head, and the blood gushed from his nostrils, and he dropped the cup and spurned the table from him.

And all the suitors, when they saw him fall, leapt from their seats; but when they looked, there was neither spear nor shield upon the wall. And they knew not whether it was by chance or of set purpose that the stranger had smitten him. But Ulysses then declared who he was, saying—

"Dogs, ye thought that I should never come back. Therefore have ye devoured my house, and made suit to my wife while I yet lived, and feared not the gods nor regarded men. Therefore a sudden destruction is come upon you all."

Then, when all the others trembled for fear, Eury-machus said, "If thou be indeed Ulysses of Ithaca, thou hast said well. Foul wrong has been done to thee in the house and in the field. But lo! he who was the

THE ODYSSEY.

mover of it all lies here, even Antinoüs. Nor was it so much this marriage that he sought, as to be king of this land, having destroyed thy house. But we will pay thee back for all that we have devoured, even twenty times as much."

But Ulysses said, "Speak not of paying back. My hands shall not cease from slaying till I have taken vengeance on you all."

Then said Eurymachus to his comrades, "This man will not stay his hands. He will smite us all with his arrows where he stands. But let us win the door and raise a cry in the city; soon then will this archer have shot his last."

And he rushed on, with his two-edged knife in his hand. But as he rushed, Ulysses smote him on the breast with an arrow, and he fell forwards. And when Amphinomus came on, Telemachus slew him with his spear, but drew not the spear from the body, lest some one should smite him unawares.

Then he ran to his father and said, "Shall I fetch arms for us and our helpers?"

"Yea," said he, "and tarry not, lest my arrows be spent."

So he fetched from the armory four shields and four helmets and eight spears. And he and the servants, Eumæus and Philætiüs, armed themselves. Also Ulysses, when his arrows were spent, donned helmet and shield, and took a mighty spear in each hand. But Melanthius, the goatherd, crept up to the armory and brought down therefrom twelve helmets and shields, and spears as many. And when Ulysses saw that the suitors were arming themselves, he feared greatly, and said to his son—

"There is treachery here. It is one of the women, or, it may be, Melanthius, the goatherd."

THE ODYSSEY.

And Telemachus said, "This fault is mine, my father, for I left the door of the chamber unfastened."

And soon Eumæus spied Melanthius stealing up to the chamber again, and followed him, and Philætiſ with him. There they caught him, even as he took a helmet in one hand and a shield in the other, and bound his feet and hands, and fastened him aloft by a rope to the beams of the ceiling.

Then these two went back to the hall, and there also came Athené, having the shape of Mentor. Still, for she would yet further try the courage of Ulysses and his son, she helped them not as yet, but changing her shape, sat on the roof-beam like unto a swallow.

And then cried Agelaüs, "Friends, Mentor is gone, and helps them not. Let us not cast our spears at random, but let six come on together, if perchance we may prevail against them."

Then they cast their spears, but Athené turned them aside, one to the pillar and another to the door and another to the wall. But Ulysses and Telemachus and the two herdsmen slew each his man; and yet again they did so, and again. Only Amphimedon wounded Telemachus, and Ctesippus grazed the shoulder of Eumæus. But Telemachus struck down Amphimedon, and the herdsman of the kine slew Ctesippus, saying, "Take this, for the ox foot which thou gavest to our guest." And all the while Athené waved her flaming ægis-shield from above, and the suitors fell as birds are scattered and torn by eagles.

Then Leiodes, the priest, made supplication to Ulysses, saying, "I never wrought evil in this house, and would have kept others from it, but they would not. Nought have I done save serve at the altar; wherefore slay me not."

And Ulysses made reply, "That thou hast served at

THE ODYSSEY.

the altar of these men is enough, and also that thou wouldest wed my wife."

So he slew him; but Phemius, the minstrel, he spared, for he had sung among the suitors in the hall, of compulsion, and not of good will; and also Medon, the herald, bidding them go into the yard without. There they sat, holding by the altar and looking fearfully every way, for yet they feared that they should die.

So the slaughtering of the suitors was ended; and now Ulysses bade cleanse the hall and wash the benches and the tables with water, and purify them with sulphur. And when this was done, that Euryclea, the nurse, should go to Penelopé and tell her that her husband was indeed returned.

BOOK XXII: PART II

THE POEM

[Ulysses Throws Off His Disguise, Slays Antinoüs,
and Proposes Death for the Terror-stricken
Suitors.](—(POPE.)

CHEN fierce the hero o'er the threshold strode;
Stripp'd of his rags, he blazed out like a god.
Full in their face the lifted bow he bore,
And quiver'd deaths, a formidable store;
Before his feet the rattling shower he threw,
And thus, terrific, to the suitor-crew:

"One venturous game this hand hath won to-day.
Another, princes! yet remains to play;
Another mark our arrow must attain.
Phœbus, assist! nor be the labor vain."
Swift as the word the parting arrow sings,
And bears thy fate, Antinoüs, on its wings:
Wretch that he was, of unprophetic soul!
High in his hands he rear'd the golden bowl!
E'en then to drain it lengthen'd out his breath;
Changed to the deep, the bitter draught of death:

* * * *

Full through his throat Ulysses' weapon pass'd,
And pierced his neck. He falls, and breathes his last.
The tumbling goblet the wide floor o'erflows,
A stream of gore burst spouting from his nose;
Grim in convulsive agonies he sprawls:

THE ODYSSEY.

Before him spurn'd, the loaded table falls,
And spreads the pavement with a mingled flood
Of floating meats, and wine, and human blood.
Amazed, confounded, as they saw him fall,
Up rose the throngs tumultuous round the hall:
O'er all the dome they cast a haggard eye,
Each look'd for arms: in vain; no arms were nigh:

* * * *

Then, grimly frowning, with a dreadful look,
That wither'd all their hearts, Ulysses spoke:

"Dogs, ye have had your day! ye fear'd no more
Ulysses vengeful from the Trojan shore;
While to your lust and spoil a guardless prey,
Our house, our wealth, our helpless handmaids lay:
Not so content, with bolder frenzy fired,
E'en to our bed presumptuous you aspired:

* * * *

The hour of vengeance, wretches, now is come;
Impending fate is yours, and instant doom."

Thus dreadful he. Confused the suitors stood,
From their pale cheeks recedes the flying blood:
Trembling they sought their guilty heads to hide
Alone the bold Eurymachus replied:

"If, as thy words import" (he thus began),
"Ulysses lives, and thou the mighty man,
Great are thy wrongs, and much hast thou sustain'd
In thy spoil'd palace and exhausted land;
The cause and author of those guilty deeds,
Lo! at thy feet unjust Antinoüs bleeds.
Not love, but wild ambition was his guide;
To slay thy son, thy kingdom to divide,
These were his aims; but juster Jove denied.
Since cold in death the offender lies, oh spare
Thy suppliant people, and receive their prayer!
Brass, gold and treasures shall the spoil defray,

THE ODYSSEY.

Two hundred oxen every prince shall pay.
The waste of years refunded in a day.
Till then thy wrath is just." Ulysses burn'd
With high disdain, and sternly thus return'd:
"All, all the treasure that enrich'd our throne
Before your rapine, join'd with all your own,
If offer'd, vainly should for mercy call;
'Tis you that offer, and I scorn them all;
Your blood is my demand, your lives the prize,
Till pale as yonder wretch each suitor lies.
Hence with these coward terms; or fight or fly;
This choice is left you, to resist or die:
And die I trust ye shall." He sternly spoke:
With guilty fears the pale assembly shook.

[The Slaying of Eurymachus and Amphinomus.]—
(WORSLEY.)

Then quailed their knees and heart, and thus again
Eurymachus spake forth: "O friends, the man
Will not give over till we all are slain.
Quick draw your knives, and pile up as ye can
Tables to cover us. It were best we ran
All in close volley against him, firm to try
And thrust him by the strength of all our clan
Down from the doors, and stir a public cry.
Then quickly his last arrow will the man let fly."

Then he his knife drew, and with terrible cry
Sprang toward the king; who, aiming at the breast,
Hard by the nipple, let the arrow fly;
And in his liver the keen barb found rest.
Dropt from his hand the knife. He with prone chest
Fell like a ruin, and threw down the meat
And the rich wine-cup. His tall forehead's crest

THE ODYSSEY.

Knocked on the earth, he rattling with both feet
The throne, and on his eyes the darkling death-rain
beat.

Then rushed Amphinomus onward with drawn knife,
To thrust Odysseus from the doors, but lo!
First with the spear Telemachus reft his life,
And 'twixt the shoulders made the iron go
Clean through the lungs; and with a clang the foe
Knocked with his forehead on the earth. Back
pressed
Telemachus, the long spear leaving so,
Lest, from the wound when he the spear would wrest,
One cut him down unwares, or stab him breast to
breast.

[While the King Slays the Suitors With the Ar-
rows, Telemachus Brings Arms.]—WORS-
LEY.)

Now therefore running to his sire came he,
And in winged words: "O father, I will seek
Helm, shield, and two spears both for thee and me
And these our helpers, lest we prove too weak.
Not without arms can we our vengeance wreak."
And wary-wise Odysseus made reply:
"Pause not a moment: if thou tarry and speak,
Soon will the river of our darts run dry.
Quick, lest the men dislodge me—all alone am I."

Thus spake he, and Telemachus obeyed,
And to the chamber went where the arms lay.
He from the armory four shields conveyed,
Eight spears, four helms of brass in plumed array,
And to his father quickly bent his way.
He first the armor round his flesh put on;

THE ODYSSEY.

Also the servants to his word obey,
And the spears lift, and shield and helmet don,
And by the brave Odysseus take their stand anon.

But the brave king, while yet his shafts availed,
This one and that kept piercing in the hall.
Still the men dropt. But when the arrows failed,
Then he the bow leaned on the shining wall,
And on his shoulders took the targe withal,
Four-hided, vast, and on his valiant head
Laced the firm helmet with its streamy fall
Of horsehair and the white plume dancing dread;
And two strong spears he lifted, each with steely head.

[Melanthius, the Goatherd, Brings Arms for the
Suitors.]—(BRYANT.)

Then thus Melanthius, keeper of the goats:

* * * "I will bring

Arms from the chamber to equip you all;
For there within, and nowhere else, I deem,
Ulysses and his son laid up their arms."

Thus having said, the keeper of the goats,
Melanthius, climbed the palace stairs, and gained
The chamber of Ulysses. Taking thence
Twelve shields, as many spears, as many helms
Of brass, with each its heavy horsehair plume,
He came, and gave them to the suitors' hands.
Then sank the hero's heart, and his knees shook
As he beheld the suitors putting on
Their armor, and uplifting their long spears.
The mighty task appalled him. * * *

* * * Again

Melanthius, stealing toward the chamber, thought

THE ODYSSEY.

To bring yet other shining weapons thence.
The noble swineherd marked him as he went,

* * * *

Up to the chamber. Unperceived by him
Who stood within and searched a nook for arms.
On each side of the entrance, by its posts,
They waited for Melanthius. Soon appeared
The goatherd at the threshold of the room,
Bearing a beautiful helmet in one hand,
And in the other a broad ancient shield,
Defaced by age and mould. Laërtes once,
The hero, bore it when a youth, but now
Long time it lay unused, with gaping seams.

They sprang and seized the goatherd, dragging him
Back to the chamber by the hair; and there
They cast him, in an agony of fear,
Upon the floor, and bound his hands and feet
With a stout cord behind his back, as bade
The great Ulysses, much-enduring son
Of old Laërtes. Round him then they looped
A double cord, and swung him up beside
A lofty pillar, till they brought him near
The timbers of the roof. * * *

They left him in that painful plight, and put
Their armor on, and closed the shining door,
And went, and by Ulysses, versed in wiles,
Stood breathing valor. Four were they who stood
Upon that threshold, while their foes within
Were many and brave. Then Pallas, child of Jove,
Drew near, like Mentor both in shape and voice,
Ulysses saw her, and rejoiced. * * *

But Pallas gave not to Ulysses yet
The certain victory; for she meant to put
To further proof the courage and the might
Both of Ulysses and his emulous son.

THE ODYSSEY.

To the broad palace roof she rose, and sat
In shape a swallow.

[Ulysses, Telemachus, and Their Two Retainers
Make Fearful Havoc Among the Suitors.]—
(POPE.)

Damastor's son, bold Agelaüs, leads
The guilty war, Eurynomus succeeds;
With these, Pisander, great Polyctor's son,
Sage Polybus, and stern Amphimedon,
With Demoptolemus; these six survive;
The best of all the shafts had left alive.
Amidst the carnage, desperate as they stand,
Thus Agelaüs roused the lagging band:

"The hour is come, when yon fierce man no more
With bleeding princes shall bestrew the floor.
Lo! Mentor leaves him with an empty boast;
The four remain, but four against an host.
Let each at once discharge the deadly dart,
One sure of six shall reach Ulysses' heart;
The rest must perish, their great leader slain:
Thus shall one stroke the glory lost regain."

Then all at once their mingled lances threw,
And thirsty all of one man's blood they flew;
In vain! Minerva turn'd them with her breath,
And scatter'd short, or wide, the points of death!
With deaden'd sound one on the threshold falls,
One strikes the gate, one rings against the walls.
The storm pass'd innocent. The godlike man
Now loftier trod, and dreadful thus began:
"'Tis now (brave friends) our turn, at once to throw
(So speed them Heaven) our javelins at the foe.
That impious race, to all their past misdeeds,
Would add our blood, injustice still proceeds,"

THE ODYSSEY.

He spoke: at once their fiery lances flew:
Great Demoptolemus Ulysses slew;
Euryades received the prince's dart;
The goatherd's quivered in Pisander's heart;
Fierce Elatus, by thine, Eumæus, falls;
Their fall in thunder echoes round the walls.
The rest retreat; the victors now advance,
Each from the dead resumes his bloody lance.
Again the foe discharge the steely shower;
Again made frustrate by the virgin-power.
Some, turn'd by Pallas, on the threshold fall,
Some wound the gate, some ring against the wall;
Some weak, or ponderous with the brazen head,
Drop harmless on the pavement, sounding dead.

* * * *

Now Pallas shines confess'd; aloft she spreads
The arm of vengeance o'er their guilty heads:
The dreadful ægis blazes in their eye:
Amazed they see, they tremble, and they fly:
Confused, distracted, through the rooms they fling.
Like oxen madden'd by the breeze's sting,
When sultry days, and long, succeed the gentle spring.
Not half so keen fierce vultures of the chase
Stoop from the mountains on the feather'd race,
When, the wide field extended snares beset,
With conscious dread they shun the quivering net:
No help, no flight; but wounded every way,
Headlong they drop; the fowlers seize the prey.
On all sides thus they double wound on wound.
In prostrate heaps the wretches beat the ground,
Unmanly shrieks precede each dying groan,
And a red deluge floats the reeking stone.*

*(BRYANT.)

* * * Then Pallas held

On high her fatal ægis. From the roof
She showed it, and their hearts grew wild with fear.

THE ODYSSEY.

[Leiodes, the Priest, Prays Without Avail for Life.]—(WORSLEY.)

Then did Leiodes clasp Odysseus' knees
And in winged words his supplication make:
"Spare me, O king, nor let my suit displease!
Since never to the women I did nor spake
Evil, but strove the lawless ways to break
Of these proud men; but they regarded not,
And for their folly a fit doom partake.
I, the mere altar-priest, now share their lot,
Though clean of guilt—so soon are benefits forgot."

Him wise Odysseus sternly eyed, and said:
"Priest of their altar if thou boast to be,
Then for my death thou must have often prayed,
And that my sweet return I might not see,
And that my dear wife should bear sons to thee—
Die!" Thus he answered, and the sword did take,
Dropt by Damastor's child when slain was he,
Shore through the mid-neck, and the neck-bones
brake;
And the head rolled beneath him, while the mouth
yet spake.

They fled along the hall as flees a herd
Of kine, when the swift gadfly suddenly
Has come among them, and has scattered them
In springtime, when the days are growing long.
Meantime, like falcons with curved claws and beaks,
That, coming from the mountain summits, pounce
Upon the smaller birds, and make them fly
Close to the fields among the snares they dread,
And seize and slay, nor can the birds resist
Or fly, and at the multitude of prey
The fowlers' hearts are glad; so did the four
Smite right and left the suitors hurrying through
The palace-hall, and fearful moans arose
As heads were smitten by the sword, and all
The pavement swam with blood.

THE ODYSSEY.

[The Completed Vengeance of the Mighty Chief.]
—(POPE.)

Meanwhile Ulysses search'd the dome, to find
If yet there live of all the offending kind.
Not one! complete the bloody tale he found,
All steep'd in blood, all gasping on the ground.
So, when by hollow shores the fisher-train
Sweep with their arching nets the roaring main,
And scarce the meshy toils the copious draught contain,

All naked of their element, and bare,
The fishes pant, and gasp in thinner air;
Wide o'er the sands are spread the stiffening prey,
Till the warm sun exhales their soul away.

And now the king commands his son to call
Old Euryclea to the deathful hall;
The son observant not a moment stays;
The aged governess with speed obeys;
The sounding portals instant they display;
The matron moves, the prince directs the way.
On heaps of death the stern Ulysses stood,
All black with dust, and cover'd thick with blood.
So the grim lion from the slaughter comes,
Dreadful he glares, and terribly he foams,
His breast with marks of carnage painted o'er,
His jaws all dropping with the bull's black gore.

Soon as her eyes the welcome object meet,
The guilty fallen, the mighty deed complete;
A scream of joy her feeble voice essay'd.

[Ulysses Compels the Wanton Serving-Maids to
Remove the Bodies of the Suitors.]—(BRY-
ANT.)

* * * Ulysses checked
Her eager zeal, and said in winged words:—

THE ODYSSEY.

"Rejoice in spirit, dame, but calm thyself,
And shout not. To exult aloud o'er those
Who lie in death is an unholy thing.
The pleasure of the gods, and their own guilt,
Brought death on these; for no respect had they
To any of their fellow-men,—the good
Or evil,—whosoever he might be
That came to them, and thus on their own heads
They drew this fearful fate. Now name to me
The women of the palace; let me know
Who is disloyal, and who innocent."

Then thus the well-beloved nurse replied:
"My son, I will declare the truth. There dwell
Here in thy palace fifty serving-maids,
Whom we have taught to work, to comb the fleece
And serve the household. Twelve of these have
walked
The way of shame. To me they give no heed,
Nor to Penelope herself. Thy son
Has just now grown to manhood, and the queen
Has never suffered him to rule the maids;
But let me now, ascending to her room,—
The royal bower,—apprise thy wife, to whom
Some deity has sent the gift of sleep."

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered thus:
"Wake her not yet, but go and summon all
The women who have wrought these shameful deeds."

He spake; the matron through the palace went
To seek the women, and to bid them come.
Meanwhile, Ulysses called Telemachus,
The herdsman and the swineherd to his side,
And thus commanded them with winged words:—

"Begin to carry forth the dead, and call
The women to your aid; and next make clean,

THE ODYSSEY.

With water and with thirsty sponges, all
The sumptuous thrones and tables. When ye thus
Have put the hall in order, lead away
The serving-maids, and in the space between
The kitchen vault and solid outer wall
Smite them with your long swords till they give up
The ghost, and lose the memory evermore
Of secret meetings with the suitor-train."

He spake; the women came, lamenting loud
With many tears, and carried forth the dead,
Leaning upon each other as they went,
And placed them underneath the portico
Of the walled court. Ulysses gave command,
Hastening their task, as all unwillingly
They bore the corpses forth. With water next,
And thirsty sponges in their hands, they cleansed
The sumptuous thrones and tables. Then the prince,
Telemachus, with shovels cleared the floor,
The herdsman and the swineherd aiding him,
And made the women bear the rubbish forth.

[The Wantons Are Put to Death for Their Mis-
deeds.](BRYANT.)

And now when all within was once again
In seemly order, they led forth the maids
From that fair pile into the space between
The kitchen vault and solid outer wall,
A narrow space from which was no escape,
And thus discreet Telemachus began:—

"I will not take away these creatures' lives
By a pure death,—these who so long have heaped
Reproaches on my mother's head and mine,
And played the wanton with the suitor-crew."

THE ODYSSEY.

He spake, and made the hawser of a ship
Fast to a lofty shaft; the other end
He wound about the kitchen vault. So high
He stretched it that the feet of none who hung
On it might touch the ground. As when a flock
Of broad-winged thrushes or wild pigeons strike
A net within a thicket, as they seek
Their perch, and find unwelcome durance there,
So hung the women, with their heads a-row,
And cords about their necks, that they might die
A miserable death. A little while,
And but a little, quivered their loose feet
In air. They led Melanthius from the hall
And through the porch, cut off his nose and ears,
Wrenched out the parts of shame, a bloody meal
For dogs, and in their anger from the trunk
Lopped hands and feet. Then having duly washed
Their feet and hands, they came into the hall,
And to Ulysses; they had done their work.
And then to the dear nurse Ulysses said:—

“Bring sulphur, dame, the cure of noxious air,
And fire, that I may purge the hall with smoke;
And go, and bid Penelope come down,
With her attendant women, and command
That all her handmaids of the household come.”

And thus in turn Dame Euryclea spake:
“Well hast thou said, my son, but suffer me
To bring thee clothes, a tunic and a cloak,
Nor with those rags on thy broad shoulders stand
In thine own palace; it becomes thee not.”

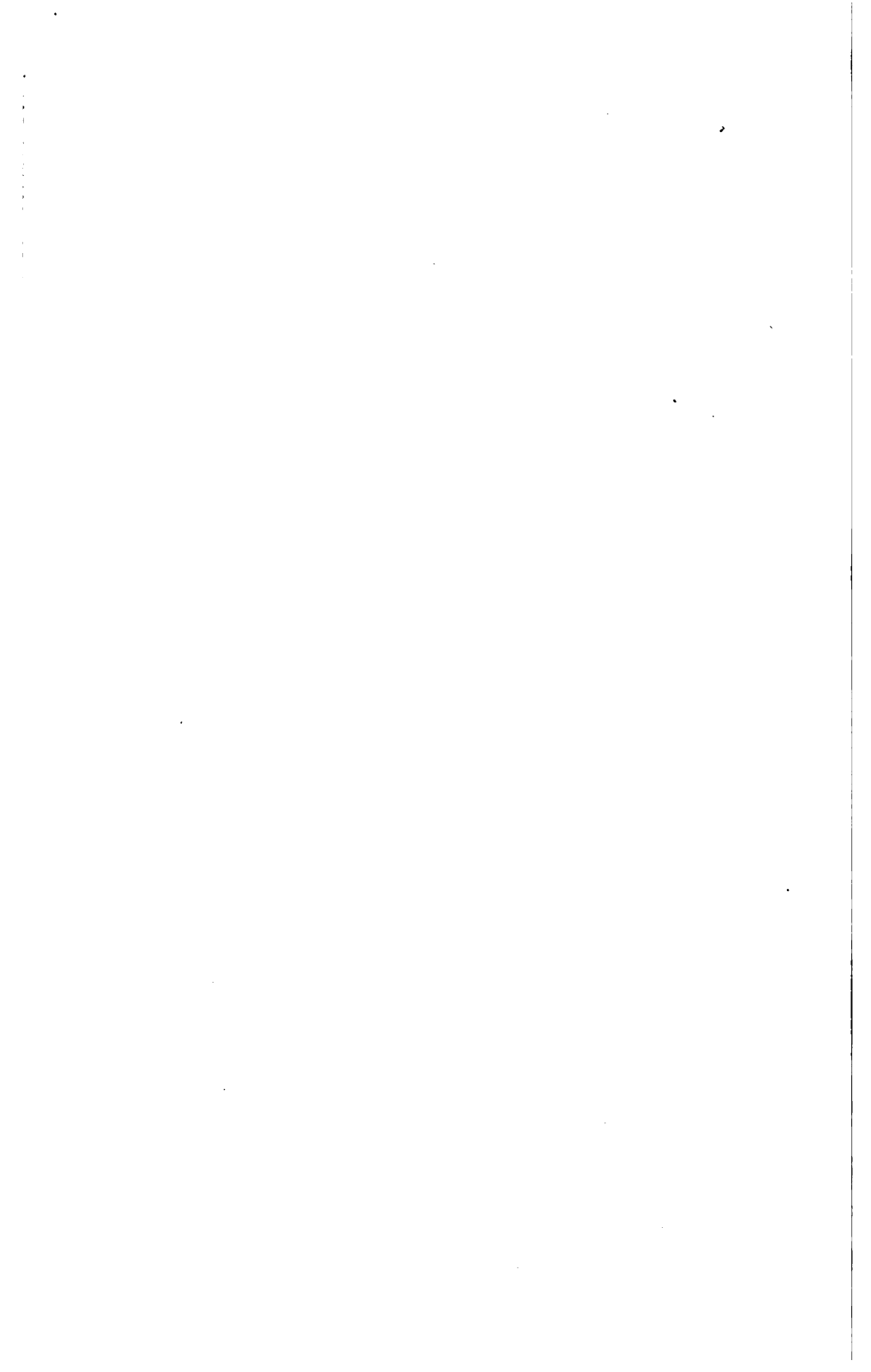
Ulysses, the sagacious, answered thus:
“First let a fire be kindled in this hall.”

He spake, and Euryclea, the dear nurse,
Obeyed, and brought the sulphur and the fire.

THE ODYSSEY.

Ulysses steeped in smoke the royal pile.
Both hall and court. The matron, passing through
The stately palace of Ulysses, climbed
The stair to find and summon all the maids,
And forth they issued, bearing in their hands
Torches, and, crowding round Ulysses, gave
Glad greeting, seized his hands, embraced him, kissed
His hands and brow and shoulders. The desire
To weep for joy o'ercame the chief; his eyes
O'erflowed with tears; he sobbed; he knew them all.

BOOK XXIII



BOOK XXIII: PART I

THE STORY

SO Euryclea went to her chamber and found the queen newly woke from slumber, and told her that her husband was returned, and how he had slain the suitors, and how that she had known him by the scar where the wild boar had wounded him.

And yet the queen doubted, and said, "Let me go down and see my son, and these men that are slain, and the man who slew them."

So she went, and sat in the twilight by the other wall, and Ulysses sat by a pillar, with eyes cast down, waiting till his wife should speak to him. But she was sore perplexed; for now she seemed to know him, and now she knew him not, being in such evil case, for he had not suffered that the women should put new robes upon him.

And Telemachus said, "Mother, evil mother, sittest thou apart from my father, and speakest not to him? Surely thy heart is harder than a stone."

But Ulysses said, "Let be, Telemachus, Thy mother will know that which is true in good time. But now let us hide this slaughter for a while, lest the friends of these men seek vengeance against us. Wherefore let there be music and dancing in the hall, so that men shall say, 'This is the wedding of the queen, and there is joy in the palace,' and know not of the truth."

So the minstrel played and the women danced. And

THE ODYSSEY.

meanwhile Ulysses went to the bath, and clothed himself in bright apparel, and came back to the hall, and Athené made him fair and young to see. Then he sat him down as before, over against his wife, and said—

“Surely, O lady, the gods have made thee harder of heart than all women besides. Would other wife have kept away from her husband, coming back now after twenty years?”

And when she doubted yet, he spake again, “Hear thou this, Penelopé, and know that it is I myself, and not another. Dost thou remember how I built up the bed in our chamber? In the court there grew an olive tree, stout as a pillar, and round it I built a chamber of stone, and spanned the chamber with a roof; and I hung also a door, and then I cut off the leaves of the olive, and planed the trunk, to be smooth and round; and the bed I inlaid with ivory and silver and gold, and stretched upon it an ox-hide that was ornamented with silver.”

Then Penelopé knew him that he was her husband indeed, and ran to him, and threw her arms about him and kissed him, saying, “Pardon me, my lord, if I was slow to know thee; for ever I feared, so many wiles have men, that some one should deceive me, saying that he was my husband. But now I know this, that thou art he and not another.”

And they wept over each other and kissed each other. So did Ulysses come back to his home after twenty years.

BOOK XXIII: PART II

THE POEM

[Penelope, Being Told That Ulysses Has Returned and Slain the Suitors, Is Incredulous, And Declares that Some God Has Done the Deed.]—(COWPER.)

AND now, with exultation loud the nurse
Again ascended, eager to apprise
The Queen of her Ulysses' safe return;
Joy braced her knees, with nimbleness of youth
She stepp'd, and at her ear, her thus bespake:
"Arise, Penelope! dear daughter, see
With thy own eyes thy daily wish fulfill'd.
Ulysses is arrived; hath reach'd at last
His native home, and all those suitors proud
Hath slaughter'd, who his family distress'd,
His substance wasted, and controll'd his son."

To whom Penelope discreet replied:
"Dear nurse! the Gods have surely taken away
Thy judgment; they transform the wise to fools,
And fools conduct to wisdom, and have marr'd
Thy intellect, who wast discreet before.
Why wilt thou mock me, wretched as I am,
With tales extravagant? And why disturb
Those slumbers sweet that seal'd so fast mine eyes?
For such sweet slumbers have I never known
Since my Ulysses on his voyage sail'd

THE ODYSSEY.

To that bad city never to be named.
Down instant to thy place again—begone—
For had another of my maidens dared
Disturb my sleep with tidings wild as these,
I had dismiss'd her down into the house
More roughly; but thine age excuses thee."

To whom the venerable matron thus:
"I mock thee not, my child; no—he is come—
Himself, Ulysses, even as I say,
That stranger, object of the scorn of all.
Telemachus well knew his sire arrived,
But prudently concealed the tidings, so
To ensure the more the suitors' punishment."

So Euryclea; she transported heard,
And springing from the bed, wrapp'd in her arms
The ancient woman, shedding tears of joy,
And in wing'd accents ardent thus replied:

"Ah, then, dear nurse, inform me! tell me true!
Hath he indeed arrived as thou declarest?
How dared he to assail alone that band
Of shameless ones, for ever swarming here?"

Then Euryclea thus, matron beloved:
"I nothing saw or knew; but only heard
Groans of the wounded; in the interior house
We trembling sat, and every door was fast.
Thus all remain'd, till by his father sent,
Thy own son call'd me forth. Going I found
Ulysses compass'd by the slaughter'd dead.
They cover'd wide the pavement, heaps on heaps,
It would have cheer'd thy heart to have beheld
Thy husband lion-like with crimson stains
Of slaughter and of dust all dappled o'er.
Heap'd in the portal, at this moment, lie
Their bodies, and he fumigates meantime

THE ODYSSEY.

The house with sulphur and with flames of fire,
And hath himself sent me to bid thee down.
Follow me then, that ye may give your hearts
To gladness both, for ye have much endured;
But the event, so long your soul's desire,
Is come; himself hath to his household Gods
Alive return'd, thee and his son he finds
Unharm'd and at your home; nor hath he left
Unpunish'd one of all his enemies."

Her answer'd then Penelope discreet:
"Ah, dearest nurse! indulge not to excess
This dangerous triumph. Thou art well apprized
How welcome his appearance here would prove
To all, but chief to me and to his son,
Fruit of our love. But these things are not so;
Some God, resentful of their evil deeds,
And of their biting contumely severe,
Hath slain those proud; for whether noble guest
Arrived or base, alike they scoff'd at all,
And for their wickedness have therefore died.
But my Ulysses distant far, I know,
From Greece hath perish'd, and returns no more."

To whom thus Euryclea, nurse beloved:
"What word, my daughter, hath escaped thy lips,
Who thus affirm'st thy husband, now within
And at his own hearth-side, forever lost?
Canst thou be thus incredulous? Hear again—
I give thee yet proof past dispute, his scar
Imprinted by a wild-boar's ivory tusk.
Laving him I remark'd it, and desired,
Myself, to tell thee, but he, ever wise,
Compressing with both hands my lips, forbade.
Come, follow me. My life shall be the pledge.
If I deceive thee, kill me as thou wilt."

THE ODYSSEY.

To whom Penelope discreet replied:
"Ah, dearest nurse, sagacious as thou art,
Thou little know'st to scan the counsels wise
Of the eternal Gods. But let us seek
My son, however, that I may behold
The suitors dead, and him by whom they died."

[Penelope, Bewildered, Knows Not the Stranger
for Ulysses, Whereat He Reproaches Her.]—
(WORSLEY.)

So went she; but with doubt the heart surged high,
Whether aloof to test him, or to shed
Warm tears, and clasp his hands, and kiss the face
and head.

So when she entered and the threshold passed,
She in the firelight, by the further wall,
Sat the king fronting. He, with eyes downcast,
Leaned in his place against the pillar tall,
Expecting if his wife some word let fall,
When she had seen him with her eyes. Long space
Mute she remained, he wondering much withal.
One time she looked upon him, face to face;
One time she knew him not, clothed in such evil case.

Sharply Telemachus then spake, and said:
"Mother, bad mother, and with hardened heart.
Why shun my father, who once shared thy bed,
And not sit near him, and in talk have part?
Lives not another wife so blunt of heart,
Herself to sunder from a husband dear,
Who from long toil, and pierced with sorrow's smart,
Comes to his own land in the twentieth year.
But, as it seems, thy breast than stone is more severe."

THE ODYSSEY.

And sage Penelope in answer spake:
"Stunned is my spirit, and my brain seems wild.
Nought can I speak to him, no question make,
Nor even look him in the eyes, dear child.
But if indeed ye are not all beguiled,
If my Odysseus hath at last returned,
Then lightly can we twain stand reconciled;
For there be true marks, readily discerned
Betwixt us, secret signs, which no one else hath
learned."

She ceasing, smiled the suffering chief divine,
And in winged words Telemachus addressed:
"Leave now thy mother here to prove each sign;
Soon will she know me better in her breast.
Now that I seem poor, and am foully drest,
She casts it in my teeth I am not he.

* * * *

"Lady, the gods that in Olympus dwell
Have, beyond female women, given to thee
Heart as of flint, which none can soften well.
Lives not a wife who could endure, save thee,
Her lord to slight, who roaming earth and sea
Comes to his own land in the twentieth year.
Haste, Euryclea, and go spread for me
Some couch, that I may sleep, but not with her—
For, as it seems, her breast than steel is more severe."

[Mystery of the Great Bed Whereby Penelope
Tries Ulysses, and Makes Certain of His Identity.]—(BRYANT.)

To this the sage Penelope replied:
"Nay, sir, 't is not through pride or disregard,
Or through excess of wonder, that I act

THE ODYSSEY.

Thus toward thee. Well do I remember thee
As thou wert in the day when thy good ship
Bore thee from Ithaca. Bestir thyself,
Dame Euryclea, and make up with care
A bed without the chamber, which he framed
With his own hands; bear out the massive bed,
And lay upon it seemly coverings,
Fleeces and mantles for his nightly rest."

She spake to try her husband; but, displeased,
Ulysses answered thus his virtuous queen:

"O woman, thou hast said unwelcome words,
Who hath displaced my bed? That task were hard
For long-experienced hands, unless some god
Had come to shift its place. No living man,
Even in his prime of years, could easily
Have moved it, for in that elaborate work
There was a mystery; it was I myself
Who shaped it, no one else. Within my court
There grew an olive-tree with full-leaved boughs,
A tall and flourishing tree; its massive stem
Was like a column. Round it I built up
A chamber with cemented stones until
The walls were finished; then I framed a roof
Above it, and put on the well-glued doors
Close fitting. Next I lopped the full-leaved boughs,
And, cutting off the trunk above the root,
Smoothed well the stump with tools, and made of it
A post to bear the couch. I bored the wood
With wimbles, placed on it the frame, and carved
The work till it was done, inlaying it
With silver, gold, and ivory. I stretched
Upon it thongs of oxhide brightly dyed
In purple. Now, O wife, I cannot know
Whether my bed remains as then it was,
Or whether some one from the root has hewn
The olive trunk, and moved it from its place."

THE ODYSSEY.

[The Great Joy of Penelope at Her Lord's Return.](WORSLEY.)

He ended, and were loosed her knees and heart,
When she the tokens of her husband knew.
Then from her eyelids the quick tears did start,
And she ran to him from her place, and threw
Her arms about his neck, and a warm dew
Of kisses poured upon him, and thus spake:
"Frown not, Odysseus; thou art wise and true!
But God gave sorrow, and hath grudged to make
Our path to old age sweet, nor willed us to partake

"Youth's joys together. Yet forgive me this,
Nor hate me that when first I saw thy brow
I fell not on thy neck, and gave no kiss,
Nor wept in thy dear arms as I weep now.
For in my breast a bitter fear did bow
My soul, and I lived shuddering day by day,
Lest a strange man come hither, and avow
False things, and steal my spirit, and bewray
My love; such guile men scheme, to lead the pure
astray.

* * * *

"But now, since clearly thou unfoldest this,
The secret of our couch, which none hath read,
Save only thee and me and Actoris,
Whom my sire gave me, when I first was wed,
To guard the chamber of our bridal bed—
Now I believe against mine own belief."
She ending a desire of weeping bred
Within him, and in tears the noble chief
Clasped his true wife, exulting in their glorious grief.

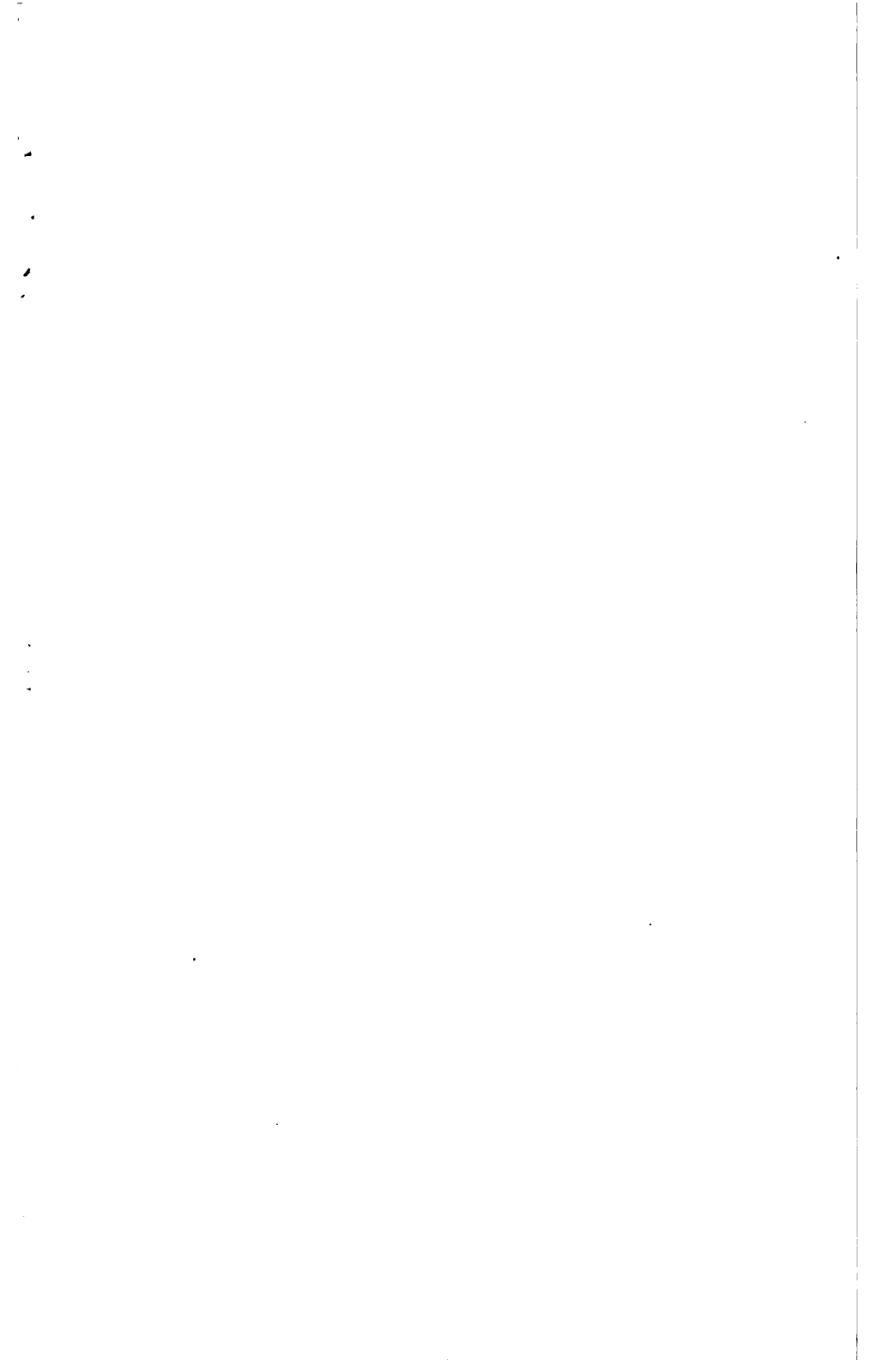
Sweet as to swimmers the dry land appears,
Whose bark Poseidon in the angry sea

THE ODYSSEY.

Strikes with a tempest, and in pieces tears,
And a few swimmers from the white deep flee,
Crusted with salt foam, and with tremulous knee
Spring to the shore exulting; even so
Sweet was her husband to Penelope,
Nor from his neck could she at all let go
Her white arms, nor forbid her thickening tears to flow.

1

BOOK XXIV



BOOK XXIV: PART I

THE STORY

CHEN came Hermes, the Messenger God, and drove before him like a swarm of bats the ghosts of the slain suitors down to the sunless land where dwell the spirits of the dead.

Meanwhile Ulysses sought his father, Laertes. The aged hero, despoiled by the suitors, with none to protect him from their insults, and grief-stricken at the long absence of his son, had been driven to seek the solitude of an humble farm. Him noble Ulysses found toiling in his garden. And his father knew him not, nor would be believe until Ulysses named the fruit trees which his father had given him when a boy. Then indeed did the old man rejoice at the return of him whom he had mourned as dead; and he fell upon his son's neck, weeping for joy.

But not yet were the trials of great Ulysses at an end. He had been twenty years away, and now he had returned to slay the sons of chiefs and nobles, the leaders of the people. Swiftly the news of the great slaughter flew throughout the city; and bitter was the wrath of many against their king, so long absent that they knew him not. Eupheithes, the father of Prince Antinoüs, grieving sore for his dead son, made outcry against his slayer, Ulysses, and cried loudly for vengeance. A tumult arose. and a great crowd of men

THE ODYSSEY.

with arms followed Eupeithes as their leader, seeking Ulysses to slay him.

Then Ulysses and his little knot of friends made haste to defend their lives against a host; and even the aged Laertes cased himself in armor and wielded a spear. And Pallas breathed the vigor of youth into his old frame, and restored his former mighty strength. Rushing upon Eupeithes, he hurled his spear with resistless force; and at the one mighty blow the chief fell in the dust and died.

Then Pallas, in her own majestic form, moved between the opposing foes and commanded peace: for such was the will of Jove.

BOOK XXIV: PART II

THE POEM

[The Souls of the Slaughtered Suitors Are Led
by Hermes to Hades.](—(WORSLEY.)

MEANWHILE the spirits of the suitors quelled
Cyllenian Hermes summoned forth and drew
Down from the sunlight: in his hands he held
Wand of pure gold, right beautiful to view,
Even that wand which can men's eyes subdue,
Whomso he listeth in long sleep to cast,
Or sleeping wake to breathe and feel anew.
Therewith he led them: the ghosts gibbering fast
Flocked with low whirr behind him, as adown he
passed.

And as when bats, amid the far recess
Of some great cave, flit gibbering and squeak low,
If from the rock, where clusteringly they press,
One fall away, and the long chain let go,
While with soft whirr they huddle again; e'en so
Clustered the dim ghosts gibbering in their fear,
Whom Hermes, giver of all good below,
On through the wide waste places, cold and drear,
Down to the sunless land was leading void of cheer.

So were they led beyond the Ocean-streams,
The White Rock, and the portals of the Sun,

THE ODYSSEY.

And past the dim land of the people of Dreams,
Thence quick the fields of asphodel they won,
Where souls of men, whose toils on earth are done,
Dwell shadowy and phantasmal.

[Ulysses Seeks His Old Father, Laërtes.]—
(WORSLEY.)

But from the city went the others down,
And to the good farm of Laërtes came,
Which long ago with toil he made his own.
There stood the house, and round it passed a frame
Of woodwork, and his few serfs in the same
Ate, drank, and slumbered, as occasion pressed.
And therein dwelt an old Sicilian dame,
Who on the farm, were he at work or rest,
Tended the old man well, and watched on his behest.

* * * *

Thus he his aged father, all alone,
Found in the well-placed garden, with sad mien
Weeding around a plant, and stooping down.
Patched rags unseemly on his form were seen,
And greaves upon his legs, now wasted lean,
Lest the thorns tear him; on each hand a glove
Working he wore, against the brambles keen,
And on his locks a goatskin helm above,
Feeding the long deep sorrow of a father's love.

Whom when divine Odysseus heeded there,
Worn with old age, with many griefs oppress,
Standing unseen behind a well-grown pear
He shed tears, and debated which were best,
Whether to fall upon his father's breast
And the whole story of his fate make clear,
How from affliction, toil, and wide unrest,

THE ODYSSEY.

Safe he returned home in the twentieth year,
Or first with words enquire, till all the truth appear.

* * * *

And his son trembled, and fierce breath did blow,
And, as the pulsing nostrils quiver and leap,
Sprang to his sire, and spake, and kissed him, fain to
weep.

"I only am that man, my father dear,
I only whom thou seekest: I at last
Come to mine own land in the twentieth year.
But cease thy groaning, and let tears be cast
Far from thine eyes, for the old grief hath passed.
No word of sorrow from thy lips let fall.
For I will speak (and there is need of haste):
Now have I slain those suitors in the hall;
God made their own fierce deeds recoil upon them all."

Then said Laertes, "If thou art indeed
Odysseus, my own child, returned from far,
Show me a sign which I may clearly read."
He answered: "First consider well this scar,
Dug, where the deep glens of Parnassus are,
By the boar's tusk, when I had gone to see
Autolycus my grandsire, ere the war,
Thence to bring back what he had vowed to me,
When to our house he came, fair largess and rich fee.

"Hear the trees also, which with kindly speech
Thou gav'st me, when a child I followed thee
All through the orchard, and made suit for each.
Thou, 'mid the long rows passing, tree by tree,
Their name and nature didst explain to me.
Ten apples, forty fig-trees, pears thirteen
Thou gavest, adding, when fit time should be,

THE ODYSSEY.

Fifty fair rows of vines, with corn between,
Where, by the ripe hours laden, the full grapes are
seen."

Then were the old man's heart and knees unstrung,
When he the tokens of his dear son knew;
And round his neck with feeble arms he clung;
Whom to his breast divine Odysseus drew
Fainting and pale. But when the wonted hue
Came to his lips, and he revived again,
He answering spake: "O Zeus, if it be true
That the proud suitors their full guerdon gain,
Surely in far Olympus ye, the gods, yet reign!

"But now right sorely in my soul I fear
Lest all the people come to make us die,
And rouse the Cephallenians, when they hear."
And wary-wise Odysseus made reply:
"Take heart my father; let thy fear pass by.
But to the house come now, that we may dine;
Near to the orchard is it; and I bade hie
Telemachus, the herdsman of the kine,
And swincherd, there with zeal to furnish food and
wine."

[The Father of the Slain Antinoös Incites the
Ithacans to Take Revenge Upon Ulysses.]—
(BRYANT.)

Now through the city meantime swiftly ran
The rumor that the suitors all had met
A bloody death. No sooner had men heard
The tidings than they came with cries and moans
Before the palace, moving to and fro.
Each carried forth his dead, and gave to each
His funeral rites, except to those who came
From distant cities; these they put on board

THE ODYSSEY.

Swift-sailing galleys of the fishermen,
That they might bear them home. And then they came
Sorrowing together in the market-place.
There, when the assembly now was full, arose
Eupeithes and addressed them. In his heart
Was sorrow, that could never be consoled,
For his slain son Antinoös, who was first
To fall before Ulysses. Weeping rose
The father, and harangued the assembly thus:—

“Great things, indeed, my friends, hath this man
done,

For us Achaians. Many valiant men
He gathered in his ships and led abroad,
And lost his gallant ships, and lost his men;
And now, returning, he has put to death
The best of all the Cephallenian race.
Come, then, and ere he find a safe retreat
In Pylos, or in hallowed Elis, where
The Epeians rule, pursue him; endless shame
Will be our portion else, and they who live
In future years will hear of our disgrace.
If we avenge not on these men of blood
The murder of our sons and brothers, life
Will not be sweet to me, and I would go
At once, and gladly, down among the dead.
Rise, then, and fall upon them ere they flee.”

So spake he, weeping; and the Greeks were moved
With pity as they heard him. * * *
They flew to arms, and when they had put on
The glittering brass, they mustered in close ranks
Before the spacious city. At their head
Eupeithes led them on, who madly deemed
Himself the avenger of his slaughtered son.
Yet he from that encounter nevermore
Was to return; his fate o’ertook him there.

THE ODYSSEY.

[Jove Decrees That Strife Shall End, and Ulysses
Reign in Peace.](BRYANT.)

Then Pallas thus addressed Saturnian Jove:
"Our Father, son of Saturn, king of kings,
Tell me, I pray, the purpose of thy heart
Yet unrevealed. Shall there be cruel war
And deadly combats, or wilt thou ordain
That these shall henceforth dwell in amity?
And cloud-compelling Jove made answer thus:

"My child, why ask me? Was it not with thee
A cherished purpose, that, returning home,
Ulysses amply should avenge himself
Upon the suitors? Do, then, as thou wilt.
Yet this, as the most fitting, I advise.
Now that the great Ulysses has avenged
His wrongs, let there be made a faithful league
With oaths, and let Ulysses ever reign;
And we will cause the living to forget
Their sons and brothers slain, and all shall dwell
In friendship, as they heretofore have dwelt,
And there shall be prosperity and peace."

He spake, and eager as she was before,
Encouraged by his words, the goddess plunged
Down from the summits of the Olympian mount.

Now when they all had feasted to the full,
The much-enduring chief, Ulysses, said:

"Go, one of you, and see if they are near."

He spake; a son of Dolius at his word
Went forth, and, coming to the threshold, stopped.
He saw them all at hand, and instantly
Bespoke Ulysses thus, with winged words:
"They are upon us; we must arm at once."

He spake; they rose, and quickly were in arms.

THE ODYSSEY.

Four were Ulysses and his friends, and six
The sons of Dolius. Old Laertes then,
And Dolius, put on armor with the rest,
Gray-headed as they were, for now their aid
Was needed. When they all had clad themselves
In shining brass, they threw the portals wide
And sallied forth, Ulysses at their head.

Now Pallas, daughter of almighty Jove,
Drew near them. She had taken Mentor's form
And Mentor's voice. The much-enduring chief,
Ulysses, saw her and rejoiced. * * *

And then the blue-eyed Pallas, drawing near
Laertes, said: "Son of Arcesias, loved
By me beyond all others of my friends,
Pray to Jove's blue-eyed daughter, and to Jove,
And brandish thy long spear, and send it forth."

So Pallas spake, and breathed into his frame
Strength irresistible. The aged chief
Prayed to the daughter of almighty Jove,
And brandished his long spear and sent it forth.
It smote Eupheithes on the helmet's cheek.
The brass stayed not the spear, the blade passed
through
And heavily Eupheithes fell to earth,
His armor clashing round him as he fell.
Then rushed Ulysses and his valiant son
Forward, the foremost of their band, and smote
Their foes with swords and lances double-edged,
And would have struck them down to rise no more,

If Pallas, daughter of the god who bears
The ægis, had not with a mighty voice
Commanded all the combatants to cease:—

"Stay, men of Ithaca; withhold your hands
From deadly combat. Part, and shed no blood."

THE ODYSSEY.

So Pallas spake, and they grew pale with awe,
And fear-struck; as they heard her words they dropped
Their weapons all upon the earth. They fled
Townward as if for life, while terribly
The much-enduring chief Ulysses raised
His voice, and shouted after them, and sprang
Upon them as an eagle darts through air.
Then Saturn's son sent down a bolt of fire;
It fell before his blue-eyed daughter's feet,
And thus the goddess to Ulysses called:—

"Son of Laërtes, nobly born and wise,
Ulysses, hold thy hand; restrain the rage
Of deadly combat, lest the god who wields
The thunder, Saturn's son, be wroth with thee."

She spake, and gladly he obeyed; and then
Pallas, the child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Plighted, in Mentor's form with Mentor's voice,
A covenant of peace between the foes.

THE END.

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